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THOUGHTS ON LIVING SUBJECTS



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THOUGHTS ON LIVING
SUBJECTS



THE BEAUTIFUL.

From a Painting by J. W. M. Turner, in the National Gallery, London.

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THOUGHTS ON LIVING SUBJECTS

BY

ROBERT P. DOWNES, LL.D.

AUTHOR OF 'PILLARS OF OUR FAITH,' 'THE ART OF NOBLE LIVING,' 'PURE PLEASURES,' 'WOMAN: HER CHARM AND POWER,' 'MAN'S IMMORTALITY AND DESTINY,' 'HOURS WITH THE IMMORTALS,' 'LIFE'S EVENTIDE,' ETC., ETC.

Oh, the little birds sang east,
And the little birds sang west,
And I smiled to think God's greatness
Flowed around our incompleteness,—
Round our restlessness, His rest.
E. B. BROWNING.

London

ROBERT CULLEY

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TO
MY FRIEND
E. HOWARD, Esq.,
IN RECOGNITION OF MANY KINDNESSES,
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

PREFACE

THESE Essays are the fruit of a desire on the part of one who has been privileged to live the studious life to pass on to others something which seems to him of value in the way of thought.

To infallibility of judgement their author makes no pretension. He has himself passed through too many mental phases to imagine that the conclusions of a mind incident to human limitations can be anything but approximate and provisional. All he claims is the virtue of sincerity and an honest desire to arrive at truth.

He is fully aware that his thoughts on 'The Insanity of War' are highly controversial. All he asks from his readers is their kind consideration of the subject in the form in which it is here presented, together with, if they should differ from him, that respect for his convictions which he entertains for their own.

ROBERT P. DOWNES.

ST. CLARE,
UPPER NORWOOD.

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THOUGHTS ON LIVING SUBJECTS

I. GENIUS

The spirit's ladder,
That from this gross and visible world of dust
Even to the starry world, with thousand rounds,
Builds itself up; on which the unseen powers
Move up and down on heavenly ministries.

SCHILLER.

The thinking man, as the result of his thoughtfulness, will get to feel how truly and impressively best thoughts and inward visions are gifts of God. When our views, as we significantly say, are most earnest, most solemn, or most beautiful, we are often conscious of being in a state, rather than making an effort.—T. T. LYNCH.

HOW deeply interesting is that mysterious endowment in certain privileged men which we distinguish by the word Genius! Compared with the might and mastery of this wondrous faculty, the pomp of kings is but a poor and fleeting pageant and the pride of millionaires a mere impertinence. All the names which live in history are the names of those who have possessed this faculty in a larger

or lesser degree. The men of genius are the jewels of the race, drinking in and giving back the divine light and fire. All the rest, as compared with them, are but as dust. They have carved our statues, painted our pictures, reared our monuments, built our cathedrals, moulded our constitutions, mastered our sciences, sung our songs, framed our epics, written our dramas, created our literature.

Of the man of genius Goethe, one of the foremost of their order, says :

His eye scarce seems to tarry on the earth ;
His ear receives all Nature's harmonies ;
And all that life and history can give
Is treasured up in his capacious breast ;
His mind collects the scattered rays of light ;
His soul can animate the lifeless clay.
Things that to us seem common he exalts,
And what we prize to him seems vanity.

The man of genius is alive at every pore. He is touched by a thousand experiences which he himself never encountered. His is the gift of the over-soul. He lives in a magnetic fellowship with the all of being. All men have whispered to him the secrets of their love, and joy, and sorrow. As a child he listens and wonders. As a man he discerns and masters. As a mirror he receives and reflects. The sun bids him good-morning. The continents nestle in his brain. Demons and angels walk with him. The star-strewn firmament is unto him as the

breast-plate of the great High Priest 'ardent with gems oracular,' from which, as from the Urim and Thummim on the ephod of Aaron, come messages full of divinity. The thought in him is as the universal, surging up through his brain like the sea through a creaking raft. Plato, and Shakespeare, and Newton, and Milton, and Beethoven, and Turner, and Raphael, and Michael Angelo, and Goethe, and Kant, and Hegel, who can define their quality, or 'pluck the heart out of their mystery'? 'Poets,' says Plato, 'utter great and wise things which they do not themselves understand.' This is so. 'I can make a hundred nobles at any time,' said Louis XIV, 'but I cannot make one man of genius.'

Special Insight

Genius is distinguished by universal sympathy and by vital energy of mind. It spurns the limitations which fetter the ordinary intellect. It strikes beneath the forms and appearances to the very heart and core of things. It overleaps the gulf which separates ascertained knowledge from discovery. It 'voyages through strange seas of thought alone.' It discerns relations which are hidden from the common mind. It has not only feet but wings. Like the wheels of Ezekiel's vision, it is full of eyes. It moves by a kind of spontaneous intuition. It

originates and creates, seizing conceptions which untold thousands stood near but could not grasp.

The proof of this has been frequently stated, but the interest is so great that it will bear restatement. All the people in Crotona over two thousand years ago had heard two village blacksmiths beating the iron on the anvil, the one with a small and the other with a great hammer; but Pythagoras alone took the hint from that rhythmic beat, and brought out of it the harmonic scale of music. Every priest in the Cathedral of Pisa had seen the lamps swing from the roof above the rolling incense, but Galileo alone deduced from their vibrations how stars and planets swing, upheld by the unseen hand of God. All the farmers in Cambridgeshire had seen apples tumble on the orchard floor, but only Newton through that simple incident grasped the universal reach and action of the wondrous law of gravitation. Thousands of ministers in the seventeenth century in our England believed in the 'Celestial City,' but it was reserved for an uncultured tinker in Bedford Jail to trace the pilgrimage of the soul to its pearly gates. A certain parson suggested that Bunyan should have kept to his pots and pans in place of attempting to instruct the people who found the parson's message from his pulpit dull. Coleridge, in reply, said, 'Alas! thou miserable parson, it would take an angel an eternity to tinker thee into a skull

of half John Bunyan's capacity !' Every man who wandered on the banks of Ayr in winter had seen the snow-flake fall into the river, but only Robert Burns had found in it a lesson of the transitoriness of sensual pleasures. Sunrise has glowed for men since time began, but Tennyson only has said :

I saw that every morning far withdrawn,
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.

Murder has stained a thousand hands in human annals and kindled remorse in as many minds, but only Shakespeare has made the murderer say :

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

We have all noticed, with varying degrees of wonder, how darkness swallows up the day and blots out the vision of the beauteous world, but only Blanco White drew the following magnificent lesson from the seeming bereavement :

Mysterious night ! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lonely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue ?

Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo ! Creation widened in man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun ! or who could find,
Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind !
Why then do we shun death with anxious strife ?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life ?

The poet at his highest obeys a divine instinct, and he can no more understand his work than the ant can understand its own wisdom or the bee explain the geometry of its cell.

Creative Power

If the question be asked, 'What is Genius?' perhaps the best answer we can furnish would be, 'It is creative power.' Talent repeats, Genius creates. Talent is a cistern, Genius is a fountain. Various definitions have been given of genius, but they only explain a portion of its secret. Dr. Johnson says, 'It is a general force of mind accidentally directed to a particular pursuit.' But this does not explain the many-sided intuition of Shakespeare, who seemed to have gained the mastery of every pursuit. Coleridge says, 'Genius is the power of carrying the feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood.' But this does not explain the subtle discrimination of Balzac, or discover how Wellington checked the power of Napoleon. Disraeli defined it as 'the infinite capacity for taking pains.' But a peasant might labour diligently for ever, and never

produce 'The Ring and the Book' of Browning, or the 'In Memoriam' of Tennyson.

The word comes from the root *gigno*, to beget. Hence it carries with it the idea of a power that creates. Genius is that mental faculty or combination of faculties by which a man is able to produce some original creation. Milton re-creates Paradise. Dante uncovers Purgatory and Hell. Homer in his 'Iliad,' Shakespeare in his plays, Michael Angelo in the marble, seem empowered with the might of the Creator when He makes men. The Moses of Michael Angelo, the Hector and Achilles of Homer, the Satan of Milton, the Caliban and Ariel of Shakespeare, confront us as creations. We view them with a wonder not unmixed with awe. It is as though mortal men had been entrusted with the power of God—the power to create.

Other works from human hands affect us with the same feeling in a lesser degree. 'Earth,' says Emerson—

Earth proudly bears the Parthenon
As the best gem upon her zone;
The morning opes with haste her lids
To gaze upon the Pyramids;
O'er England's abbeys bends the sky
As on its friends with kindred eye;
For out of Thought's interior sphere
These wonders rose in upper air,
And Nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat,

Divine Immanence

If we ask whence that mystic power proceeds which we call genius, we need first to consider the great truth of the Divine Immanence in Nature, and in Man, the Lord and epitome of Nature.

God does not stand apart from the world, but is the source of all its life and the fount of all its energy. The philosophy of our time has dismissed the master-mechanic of the Deists of an earlier century, and realized in his stead the immanent and yet transcendent God, in whom all things 'live, and move, and have their being.' There is one Life Omnipresent, and yet personal, which fills all things. Creation is instinct with the Spirit of God. There is a sense in which God is the soul of the world, pervading and animating all things. The whole earth is an arena of inspiration or inbreathing of life—life which acts in relation to physical phenomena as sustaining and directing force, in relation to the animal world as instinct, and in relation to the human soul as the power of thought, feeling, and self-direction. The might of the world is the might of the God who sustains it. The beauty of the world is the smile of God which irradiates it. The wisdom of the ant, the bee, and the migrating bird is an effluence of the divine wisdom. The human understanding and intelligence are the gifts of God to a

higher creature than the beast—a creature who is the special organ of Deity in this lower world, a creature whose intellect is related to all truth, his heart to all love, his imagination to all beauty, his conscience to all virtue, his spirit to all that is divine.

Special Receptivity

Such is man. No mean creature, but a creature inspirable by God. But while every human creature is thus inspirable, and divine visitation and illumination are the common endowments of the race, we are compelled to acknowledge the existence of different degrees of receptivity. If we take, for the purpose of illustration, the statement, 'God is light,' some souls drink in and reflect the light, while others seem opaque and irresponsive to its touch. Some minds, again, like distorted mirrors, break up the light, and thus reflect all objects brokenly, imperfectly, and with a personal bias, while others hold a level mirror up to truth and God. Some men lie open in the depths of their spiritual nature to the divine inflowing, while others offer no inlet for the entrance of the divine. Some are keenly conscious of—

A grace of finer being, a larger life
Upon their own impinging,

while others tread their onward way very little removed from an existence merely animal. In some

the divine element is as a spark that smoulders in grey ashes, while in others it leaps and glows, a living flame. To this last order we may apply Milton's description of the angels :

All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
All intellect, all sense.

Such souls become the organs of the divine insight, and we might almost say the divine omniscience. We fitly speak of them as inspired. Exquisitely vital and sympathetic, through them the divine finds utterance. They instruct us in divine truth. They reveal to us divine beauty. They are inspired men. But inspiration implies an inspirer. That inspirer is God. The old Greek thinkers felt after this great truth when they spake of the genius of a man as a spirit, or demon, supposed to preside over his destiny in life—that is, to inspire his efforts and direct his conduct, and to be his guard and guide. In that old Greek world the poet was not merely regarded as an artist—he was held to be inspired by the gods.

We have banished the multitudinous deities of ancient Greece, having found the Universal Father. We are still convinced, however, of the divine immanence. We recognize the presence of the Deity in created things, and the fact that certain human souls are peculiarly responsive to His breath

and are charged by the infinite intelligence with a special message for mankind. It was surely the consciousness of the more intimate inspiration of this divine or cosmic Spirit which prompted those imperishable lines of Wordsworth's:

And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, *and in the mind of man ;*
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

That men have abused their genius, have ' profaned the God-given strength, and marred the lofty line,' is no more an argument against this conception of an invisible creative Spirit than that men have abused their religion by making it minister to selfishness or by fashioning after their own likeness a cruel and vindictive God.

A Transmitter

Thus the man of genius is, first of all, a transmitter. He is a medium through whom God speaks. We regard a fine frenzy as his appropriate attitude. He is, for the want of a better word, mediumistic. His soul is as a reed through which God pours celestial music. Hence, he is of all men the least

self-conscious. Conceit is utterly foreign to his nature. He is not proud of his gifts, for he knows they are gifts, and are not self-acquired. Goethe, in one of his conversations with Eckermann, accentuates this truth. He says: 'No productiveness of the highest kind, no remarkable discovery, no great thought which bears fruit and has results, is in the power of any one. Such things are elevated above all earthly control; man must consider them as unexpected gifts from above, as pure children of God, which he must receive and venerate with joyful thanks.'

In the same way, our greatest poet since Milton styles the poetic imagination

The vision and the faculty *divine*.

Milton himself, contemplating his loftiest purpose as a poet—the creation of his 'Paradise Lost'—tells us that the power to conduct so high an argument 'is not to be obtained but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit that can enrich with all utterance and all knowledge, and send out His seraphim with the hallowed fire of His altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom He pleases.'

It is in this attitude of devout recognition of divine aid that all the noblest works of genius have been wrought. It may be that the poet, the teacher, or the builder wist not whence the in-

spiration came; but, nevertheless, there was the consciousness of the touch of the divine and the presence of a solemn purpose. To quote once more from Emerson :

The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned. . . .
Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias wrought;
Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
Out from the heart of Nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below—
The canticles of love and woe;
The hand that rounded Peter's dome,
And grained the aisles of Christian Rome,
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew—
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

The Worker's Wonder

In proof of what we have affirmed, we find that the man of genius is astonished at his own work. He wonders how he produced that which so far transcends his ordinary faculties. He looks back with surprise on his moods and hours of inspiration. The afflatus which fell upon him and passed, the mysterious tide which shook him like a reed in the river and left him weaker for the impact—

how wonderful they were! The poet found his epic or his song, he did not make it. With a flash out of the dark cloud of nescience the great invention came. The thinker knew not what he did when the great thought leapt out which dazed the world and woke the slumbering ages. 'Not from me, but from Thee, O God, has it come,' exclaimed Handel when the 'Hallelujah Chorus' burst upon him like a gift direct from heaven. Mozart said of his finest melodies, 'Whence and how they come I know not, nor can I force them.' Dean Swift, examining in later life one of his finest efforts, cried out in amazed wonder, 'O God! what a genius I had when I wrote this.' This is more or less the experience of all creative minds. Their best things are given to them. They were not laboured for, but given by a power which was *in* them, but not *of* them—in them, and yet *above* them.

Conscious of all this, Wordsworth—the poet of the pure, devout imagination—pondering the influences received from the world of Nature in his earlier years, breaks forth into that fine utterance of praise for monitions and inspirations yet higher and diviner :

Not for these I raise
 The Song of thanks and praise,
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,

Fallings from us, vanishings;
 Blank misgivings of ■ Creature
 Moving about in worlds not realized,
 High instincts before which our mortal Nature
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised. . . .

Which be they what they may,
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
 Are yet the master light of all our seeing;
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
 Our noisy years as moments in the being
 Of the Eternal Silence.

In the same mood of mind Dante offers thanks to God for those 'wandering gleams,' those 'sparks from His great glory,' which he was permitted to receive and emit for the illumination of men. Then, in our later time, we have the touching prayer with which Rudyard Kipling concludes his poem entitled 'Life's Handicap':

If there be good in what I wrought,
 Thy hand compelled it, Master, Thine;
 Where I have failed to meet Thy thought,
 I know, through Thee, the blame is mine.

II. THE BEAUTIFUL

All things are beautiful
Because of something lovelier than themselves
Which breathes within them and will never die.

ANON.

You say that the inhabitants of Zurich are your friends. I grant you that such may be the fact, but do you know what the Evening Star shall bring you and the vision of the open heavens?—ANON.

BEAUTY is a universal presence, and the love of beauty is a gift of God to universal man. It builds its temple not only in the heart of mighty poets, but beneath its starry dome little children and lowly men and women also gather and adore. It is true there are degrees in the discernment and appreciation of beauty, but the love of it is native to the human soul. Man is the crown and epitome of nature. He is a *microcosm*, or little world. All the forces and principles of nature reside in him. Sun and star, tree and flower, bird and beast, are all in man. In the process of his evolution he has passed through them, and, therefore, has a fixed and enduring affinity with them. He is creation's lord, and stands in the centre, touching

her at every point. All the seasons are in him. Light and dark, cold and heat, are in him.

All figures, organs, hues, and graces,

reside in him. As the finite image of God, he is the finite epitome of creation. Were the phenomena of nature not a part of him, he would not discern their meaning or their beauty. Goethe and Wordsworth have alike taught us—

How exquisitely the individual mind to the external world
Is fitted, and how exquisitely, too,
The external world is fitted to the mind.

They have discerned, as poets, that which Darwin has attested as science. 'Had I not the world in my soul from the beginning,' says Goethe, 'I must ever have remained blind with my seeing eyes, and all experience and observation would have been dead and unproductive. The light is there, and the colours surround us; but if we bore nothing corresponding in our own eyes, the outward apparition would avail nothing.'

We see and admire because we have a part in that which we see and admire. There is in our love of Nature, as Hazlitt declares, all the force of individual attachment. 'She wears for us always one face, and speaks the same well-known language,

striking on the heart like the music of one's native tongue heard in some far-off country.'

To recapitulate, man knows Nature, and loves her because, being in the image of God, he is the finite archetype and summary of all things, the world over again, at once its lord and its epitome. He may proudly say, 'I am the summary and epitome of the world, therefore nothing that is in the world is foreign to me!' George Herbert writes :

Man is all symmetry,
Full of proportions, one limb to another,
And to all the world besides,
Each part may call the farthest brother.

We first share the life and symmetry of things, and then we are delighted by their aspect and appearance in Nature. Our human constitution is the ladder by which we ascend to the vision and appreciation of the beautiful, from the beauty of the daisy on the sod to the beauty of holiness in the Deity. Much has been written on the philosophy of beauty, and not without reason, since everything which pleases must give pleasure upon some certain principles, but it may all be summed up in two ideas : first, inherent beauty in the object ; and second, some definite affinity with that beauty and instinctive delight in it existing in the mind of the observer. Emerson has boldly stated the matter thus :

There is no great and no small
To the Soul that maketh all:
And where it cometh, all things are;
And it cometh everywhere.

I am owner of the sphere,
Of the seven stars and the solar year,
Of Caesar's hand, and Plato's brain,
Of Lord Christ's heart, and Shakespeare's strain.

The Presence of Beauty

That is a very imperfect conception which affirms that beauty consists only in the mind of the observer and not in the object presented to the mind. A child or a savage would grasp at a glance the distinction between beauty and its opposite; for example, in a heap of slag and a daisy-sprinkled meadow, a noisome pool and a snow-clad Alp. No; there is essential beauty in objects themselves, and with this beauty our world overflows. This is a truth so evident that it is almost an impertinence to particularize. It is written broad on earth, and sea, and open sky, and this with such passages of variety and change that we never grow weary of its presence or its song. We should only need to trace a single wild-flower to the dell or riverside from whence it sprang to encounter miracles of loveliness on the way. It is, indeed, marvellous to note the inestimable beauty which clothes and glorifies the tiniest things: the darling blue of the forget-me-

not ; the violet's drooping bell and perfumed incense ; the acorn's perfect cup ; the delicately drawn and tinted lines of the convolvulus ; the floral Venice anchored on the wayside pond, with its dream of spires, and campaniles, and domes. The wish expressed by Wordsworth might make a seraph lovelier to his kind :

Would that the little flowers were born to live
Conscious of half the pleasure which they give.
That to this mountain daisy's self were known
The beauty of its star-shaped shadow thrown
On the smooth surface of this naked stone.

And what of those larger, grander forms on which the stamp of beauty is impressed, and which strike a silence through the mind ?—day-break, and golden noon, and shadowy night ; the tender flush of spring, the rich hues of summer, the gorgeous decays of autumn, the white robe of winter ; the splendour of the open heaven, with its cloud-palaces built along the horizon ; the mountains visited all nights by troops of stars or flinging from their gleaming crests the dawn ; the sea sleeping in delicious calm, earth's grandest mirror, or chafed by tempest trampling in wild tumult the echoing shore. Then in another realm, the grace of the fawn and the flight of the sea-bird, the majesty of man fronting with free glance the free sky, and the

tenderness of woman with the infant nestling in her arms.

O miracle, sweet, gentle, strange, and true.

Keats's famous line, 'A thing of beauty is a joy for ever,' contains a very subtle criticism. If a thing is really beautiful, it will travel with us through life, a 'life's star,' that never wanes or fades. Indeed, it will seem to grow more beautiful as we ourselves grow in real culture and appreciation.

Beauty a Witness for God

Beauty is the autograph of God written clear and broad on all His works. 'Nature is too thin a screen,' says Emerson; 'the glory of the One breaks in everywhere.' The great militant Apostle wrote: 'The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.' Who, again, does not revere Coleridge? of whom his friend Hazlitt said that—

He saw nought but beauty,
And heard the voice of the Almighty One
In every breeze that blew, or wave that murmured.

We are conscious of the breath of God upon our souls, but we discern Him only through the medium of the finite and the material. Only through this medium is God knowable. Without an objective

world, rich and beautiful as our own, the idea of God could not be conceived. But creation is the witness of His power, life in all its manifestations is the attestation of His presence, and beauty is the smile of His countenance rippling through visible things and transfiguring them. 'I but open my eyes,' writes Browning the poet-seer—

I but open my eyes—and perfection, no more and no less,
In this kind I imagined, full fronts me, God is seen God
In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul, and the
clod.

Our later poets have revived the great idea, so prominent in Milton, of the appeal of God to the spirit of man through the medium of beauty in the visible world. We cannot fail, if open-eyed, to note its presence—

On hill, in dale, forest, or mead;
By pavèd fountain, or by rushy brook,
Or on the beachèd margent of the sea.

It is worthy of remark that the presence of so much beauty in the world creates, as Dr. Mozley taught, a 'baffling extra' which utterly confounds and refutes the philosophy of atheistic materialism. The picture which delights us demands the thought and pencil of an artist. What, then, of the pictures of rarest loveliness with which the world is crowded?

Blind evolution could not conceive or paint them. Natural selection may have influenced the colour and the form of certain birds and animals, making the males more attractive to the females of the species. But why are the heavens blue and not brown? Why do the waves break in exquisite curves of sapphire on the yellow sands? Why is the meadow providing grass for the dull oxen dappled with fair colours of yellow and purple? And why does the wheat which we grind for food bend to the sickle in graceful lances of yellow gold?

Some have affirmed that the secret of beauty is found in the law of utility. But what are the direct uses of the peacock with its gorgeous plumage, and the swan with its faultless grace, and the kingfisher in its jewelled flight? Why should the eye of the antelope be polished, or the rainbow be painted on the cloud? In what does the secret lie but in this, that all the cups of God run over, and the cup of use ripples over into beauty. To quote a fine thought from Plato, 'God has persuaded necessity to become harmonious, and fashioned according to beauty.' He gives us a benediction with every gift, a blessing with our daily bread—the benediction and the blessing of beauty.

Oh, mighty love! man is one world, and hath
Another to attend him.

It would be ungrateful to dwell on the presence of beauty in the world and forget to acknowledge its witching charm when spring returns to England—‘a primrose in her hand, a solitary lark above her head.’ Traverse the dear old land when ‘the milky meads of May’ invite, and the thrush and the blackbird are fluting in the woods. Look on her when the hawthorn white and crimson is in blossom; when the lilac blooms, and the laburnum shakes out her golden rain; when the chestnut lifts to the sky its pyramid of foliage and puts forth its cones of white and pink. Note the bright emerald of the larch raising its soft spires among the blue-black pines, the overlapping depth and grace of the sycamore, the orchards when they wear their bridal veils and hang their mystery of beauty in the air like suspended wreaths of exquisitely tinted snow. Study her waters as they sleep in the mountain tarn, or rest in the trout-pool stained by the wine of the hills, or flicker in the brook in living amber over the enamelled stones. Listen to the lark’s shrill carol, the dove’s soft murmur, the cuckoo’s mellow note, the clash of sweet bells from the old church tower. Mark how the wings of her mornings are clothed with silver and the feathers of her evenings with yellow gold, and say, ‘How lovely is our England!’

The Ministry of Beauty

We may be sure, then, in an order where nothing comes by chance, but all things have some definite end and aim, that the prevalence of beauty is not without its purpose. It is no idle witness which declares that—

Every pulse that beats
At the glad summons of imperious beauty
Obeys a law ; the very cloud that floats
Along the dead green surface of the hill
Is ruled and scattered by a God-like will.

There can be no question that where a man is alive to the presence and the magic of the beauty which robes the earth as with a garment, to the vision of flowers that blow and clouds which glorify the deeps of heaven, the consideration of them refines and elevates.

The God-like powers inductive of the soul,
Rise by these golden steps of sweet ascent
Up to the eternal throne.

Furthermore, there is a law of assimilation, by which beautiful objects lend something of their grace to the mind which contemplates and delights in them. Flowers on the table rebuke unlovely manners and make it difficult to say vulgar things. A plant in the window of a city slum inspires hope of some abiding charm in those who tend it, and

we cannot despair of a man who delights in a garden.

Beauty has also a moral as well as an aesthetic influence. It adds to the joy of mere physical and mental perception feelings of gratitude, veneration, and desire for finer being. Dr. Mozley wisely said that the beauty of outward Nature was necessary to man, in order to the perfection of praise. We can scarcely move in such a temple as that in which we dwell without adoration, or tread its courts without thanksgiving. Not for the ancient Paradise alone is the morning hymn of Milton tuned :

These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty ! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair ; Thyself how wondrous then ?
Unspeakable, who sitt'st above these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these Thy lowest works : yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.

Finally, the beauty of created things should lead us to aspire after that absolute loveliness of which they are the fleeting symbols and imperfect types. Plato has said, 'The true order of approaching to the things of love is to use the beauties of the world as steps along which to mount upward to that other beauty, rising from the love of one to the love of two, and from the love of two to the love of all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair deeds, and from fair deeds to fair thoughts, till

from fair thoughts he reaches on to the thought of the uncreated loveliness, and at last knows what true beauty is.'

Our own great poet Spenser echoes this sublime philosophy when he prays that those who find delight in the loveliness which God has lavished around us,

Of these fair forms, may lift themselves up higher,
And learn to love with zealous humble duty,
The eternal fountain of that heavenly Beauty.

III. THE SUBLIME

Thou hast set Thy proud dominion
Where the eagle spreads his pinion ;
Where the clouds clash out their thunder,
Thrilling men with fear and wonder ;
Where, like swords of dazzling sheen,
Vivid lightnings flash and gleam ;
Where fate unfolds its mystic scroll,
And tragic passions awe the soul.

R. P. D.

Sublimity is the throne of genius.—FAVART.

IN dealing with the sublime, as contrasted with the beautiful, we enter a region into which few may care to follow us ; but, nevertheless, it is good for us to climb the starry heights from which we look out upon the Infinite. Sublimity avoids the mean and the trivial. It communes only with majesty, or, it may be, with terror. In its loftiest flights it makes the stars the dust of its feet. There is thunder in its tread and lightning in its glance. Men often stand aloof from it because it claims attention and an ample mind ; but, wherever it is fitly expressed, it is born for immortality.

The ages sweep around it with their wings,
Like angered eagles cheated of their prey.

There is a sublime in Nature, when her mightier forces are awake and she is clothed in terror, when the storm-demon is abroad, 'and the pillars and clefts of the granite ring like a God-swept lyre,' and when, as Ruskin pictures them, 'the fiery peaks, with heaving bosoms and exulting limbs, and with clouds drifting like hair from their bright foreheads, lift up their Titan hands to heaven, saying, "We live for ever!"'

There is a sublime in Literature, when inspiration bursts upon the poet, and bears him darkly, fearfully afar, to hear the clangour of hell's trumpets, or the lofty songs of adoring angels: when he enchants and masters us—

Not with tinkling rhymes,
But high and noble matter, such as flies
From brains entranced, and filled with ecstasies.

There is a sublime in Art, when the painter suggests on the canvas, or the musician prompts through mighty harmonies, 'thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls.' There is a sublime in human action, in deeds of splendid daring and heroic passion, when

One ruddy drop of manly blood
The surging sea outweighs.

There is a sublime in Religion, when the suffering saint, whose heart is like a palace shattered,

Looks with pale and steady face
Right toward the thunder place,

and cries, 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.'

Beauty, for the most part, is associated with limitation, and, as Burke asserts, with 'littleness.' It implies something circumscribed and bounded, something which our faculties can easily embrace. It dwells in a small temple. But—to borrow a fragment of Carlyle's splendid phrasing—'The Cathedral of sublimity is the dome of immensity, coped with star-galaxies; paved with the green mosaic of land and ocean; and, for altar, verily the star-throne of the Eternal! Its litany and psalmody the noble acts, the heroic work and suffering, and true-hearted utterance of all the valiant of the sons of men. Its choir-music the ancient winds and oceans and deep-toned inarticulate but most speaking voices of Destiny and History—supernal as ever of old. It dwells between the two great silences—

Stars silent rest o'er us,
Graves under us silent.'

Aspects of Sublimity

Sublimity consorts with wonder, with terror, and with awe. It hushes the soul as beneath the wings of a great archangel. It is found where anything startles and elevates the mind, wherever it contemplates anything above itself, and perceives it to be so. Beauty charms us; sublimity awes us.

Beauty attracts and wins us ; sublimity, on the other hand, while it fascinates us, inspires a feeling resembling fear. Beauty depicts

Some Hyacinthine boy, for whom
Morn well might break and April bloom.

Sublimity depicts the lost Archangel, rearing from off the Stygian pool his mighty stature—

On each hand the flames,
Driven backwards, slope their pointing spires and rolled
In billows, leave in the midst a horrid vale.

Beauty depicts

The wandering moon
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that hath been led astray,
Through the heavens' wide pathless way,
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.

Sublimity exclaims, when Satan has called his legions to a great revolt :

He spake : and, to confirm his words, outflew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim ; the sudden blaze
Far round illumined hell : highly they raged
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms,
Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of heaven.

Beauty tells of

Magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in fairy lands forlorn.

Sublimity presents the marvellous image :

I have seen
 A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell ;
 To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
 Listened intensely ; and his countenance soon
 Brightened with joy ; for from within were heard
 Murmurings whereby the monitor expressed
 Mysterious union with its native sea.
 Even such a shell the universe itself
 Is to the ear of faith.

It is the function of the sublime to inspire sentiments of wonder, of pity, and of power not infrequently blended with terror. It comes to us

With thunder, and with music, and with pomp.

Beauty hushes us to rest with words

Which fall as soft as snow on the sea,
 And melt in the heart as silently.

Sublimity sends forth from angels ruined, yet defiant,

A shout, that tears Hell's concave, and, beyond,
 Frights the stern reign of Chaos and old Night.

Beauty says :

Down on your knees,
 And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love.

Sublimity cries :

Methinks it were an easy leap
 To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon ;
 Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
 And pluck up drownèd honour by the locks,

Beauty, tender and pitiful, says :

An old man broken with the storms of state
Is come to lay his weary bones among ye ;
Give him a little earth for charity.

Sublimity says, pleading for the tortured Lear :

O let him pass ! He hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

Sublimity rouses and elevates the mind through the pure agitation of astonishment. 'Sounding on through words and things a dim and perilous way,' it charges the soul with fears, and hopes, and longings infinite. Power, mystery, and vastness are its prominent attributes, and through these it greatens us. It stimulates all the faculties of the mind and invests life with a new magnificence. It lends us wings by which we mount to God. Time and space vanish at its imperial bidding, and eternity and infinity exercise their mastery over the spirit, which bows obedient to their sway. The little eddy, before isolated on the shore, is joined by the limitless sea, which makes it also great. No longer moving on itself in monotonous and melancholy circles, it becomes part and parcel of the living universe. Such enlargement do they experience who come into conscious contact with the sublime.

Yet it is possible for the sublime to be pressed too far. It loses its power when it topples over

into horror. We resent its mastery when it inflicts upon us mental torture. As, for example, when Milton describes the fiery deluge which preys upon the lost in hell; or Byron pictures its lurid waves breaking on 'a living shore heaped with the damned like pebbles'; or Dante writes over its dread portal that sentence of eternal doom :

Abandon hope, all ye who enter here.

The Sublime in Nature

The true sublime in Nature is not far to seek. Beneath, above, and around us it makes its appeal in a thousand forms of God-created majesty and splendour. The pageant and the appeal are before us, and we need only eyes to see and minds to appreciate and respond. The strength of the mountains, with their crags and precipices and shouting torrents, and stainless altars of unsullied snow. The dimness of the glimmering sea, or its sheeted silver when trodden by the 'soundless feet of the sun.' The vast shadow of brooding and mysterious night. 'That eternal song without words,' the music of the spheres. The grand cloud-cathedral, with its flight of vapour steps, and mist towers, and thunder organ. The great rivers, singing on their way to rest. The eagle's daring flight, and yet more daring gaze on the glory of the mid-day

sun. 'The tiger, so wildly, fiercely beautiful, terrifying the desert with his glittering and gorgeous motion as he bounds over brake and jungle in famine or in play.'

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

The rush and clang of the ocean surges on groaning rocks, and the storm-petrel's plaining discrepant cry above their noisy war. The hush of mighty forests when the winds are still, or their pomp when Autumn plunges through their deeps with her horses and chariots of fire. Winter, with 'its white-winged messengers who speed soft-footed out of silence,' and its gleaming 'sword which stills the laughing waters at a breath.' The great deep heaven, where dust-like shoals of stars, sand-banks of suns, and shining films of firmaments, in nebula separated from nebula by trillions of leagues, stretch and glitter to the feet of God. Whoso will duly consider these manifestations of the sublime in the world we tread, and in the boundless universe beneath it, around it, and above it, an overpowering humility will bend his knees, and an unutterable solemnity will fall on him as from the very presence-chamber of the Highest.

Let us consider these splendours that they may greaten us in the vision and the awe of them, ever mindful that—

Nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk ; but, as the temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal.

The Sublime in Art

Art is man's imitation of God's work. It is greatest, therefore, when it is most true to Nature. Nature stands aloof from smoothness, uniformity, and pettiness of detail. She demands, in all her manifestations, freedom and breadth. She bears upon her front the unmistakable impress of power. It is thus with the sublime in Art. Beauty may be more or less associated with prettiness ; it may be fastidious in its demand for balance and proportion. Sublimity, on the other hand, demands magnificence and freedom from all fettering restraint. Hence, in architecture, northern Gothic represents the sublime. The Moorish arch, curved like a scimitar and rich in Arabesque adornment ; the Greek temple, faultless in outline and restrained in expression, are both undeniably beautiful. But sublimity demands the rugged splendour of the cliff, the fetterless variety of the forest, and what has been fitly termed the

'divine disorder' of the stars. It obeys only the call of Nature, and Nature is the art of God.

This is finely illustrated in Ruskin's plea for Gothic, where he says of the architect and builder: 'Let us watch him with reverence as he sets side by side the burning gems, and smooths with soft sculpture the jasper-pillars, that are to reflect a ceaseless sunshine, and rise into a cloudless sky; but not with less reverence let us stand by him, when, with rough strength and hurried stroke, he smites an uncouth animation out of the rocks which he has torn from among the moss of the moorland, and heaves into the darkened air the pile of iron buttress and rugged wall, instinct with work of an imagination as wild and wayward as the northern sea; creations of ungainly shape and rigid limb, but full of wolfish life; fierce as the winds that beat, and changeful as the clouds that shade them.'

Who can for one moment question that we find the sublime in 'this wildness of thought, and roughness of work; this look of mountain brotherhood between the Cathedral and the Alp; this magnificence of sturdy power.' Greek and Moorish architecture are beautiful in their symmetrical unity and rich adornment; while Gothic is sublime, in its indefiniteness and variety, suggesting infinity.

The same law holds good in—

Sculpture, Painting, and Music

The sublime in each of these realms of Art is inseparably associated with grandeur, freedom, and fidelity to Nature. This is seen in those sculptures from the frieze of the Parthenon, attributed to Phidias, which stand supreme among the art treasures of the British Museum. As contrasted with the equine statues which are supposed to adorn our streets, these masterpieces of Grecian power appear to live and move, to roll their eyes, to gallop and prance and curvet, and to pour out on us from their quivering nostrils vital breath. It is this same fidelity to Nature in her freedom and her grandeur which puts the stamp of the sublime on the sculptures and frescoes of Michael Angelo, the landscapes and seascapes of Turner, and also on those mighty fugues and heart-shattering bursts of elemental music, those voices of the forest, the Alp, and the ocean, which have won for Beethoven, Handel, and Wagner the epithet sublime. In these works, as contrasted with the tinkling of the lute in my lady's chamber, 'the glory and the sum of things' seem to 'flash along the chords and go.'

They bridge abysmal agonies
With strong, clear calms of harmonies.

They inspire in the o'er-fraught heart the feeling
which oppressed the soul of Richter when he ex-

claimed, beneath the spell of a mighty symphony, 'Away! away! thou speakest of things which in all my life I have not found, and which in all my endless life I shall not find.' They are, as Carlyle says, 'A kind of unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the infinite, and lets us for a moment gaze into that.'

The Sublime in Literature

The same law holds good with regard to Literature, when, in epic or in tragedy, it strikes the elemental chords of passion, of rapture, or of terror. We hear it in Job, when God calls to him out of the whirlwind; in Homer, when he raises at the gates of Troy the cry of battle; in Shakespeare, when Lear raves with the tempest which blows on his white head, and appeals to the heavens to pity him because they are also old; in Dante, when he beholds the great white rose of eternity, whose petals are the millions of the redeemed drinking in the light which streams from the face of God; and in Aeschylus, when he chains Prometheus to his rock in the frosty Caucasus, and bids him defy the unjust tyranny of Jove.

In a recent novel, entitled *The Divine Fire*, the distinction between the beautiful and the sublime is so well expressed that we cannot refrain from quotation. The hero of the book is explaining to the

heroine, in the library of her father, the difference between Sophocles and Aeschylus, and puts it thus :

“ Sophocles carved his tragedies. He carved them in ivory, polished them up, back and front, till you can't see the marks of the chisel. And Aeschylus jabbed his out of the naked granite where it stood, and left them there, with the sea at their feet, and the mist round their heads, and the fire at their hearts.”

“ But—but he left the edges a little rough.”

“ He did. God leaves them so sometimes when He's making a big thing.”

Of the sublime in prose literature, except in the pages of Isaiah and Job, we know of nothing which equals that dream of Jean Paul Richter, translated by De Quincey, in which he thus pictures, until thought becomes a positive agony, the overpowering vastness of the universe :

‘ God called up from dreams a man into the vestibule of heaven : “ Come thou hither, and see the glory of My house ” ; and to the angels round His throne He said : “ Take him, strip off his robes of flesh, cleanse his vision, put a new breath into his nostrils, but touch not with any change his human heart—the heart that weeps and trembles.” It was done, and, with a mighty angel as guide, the man stood ready for an infinite voyage. They

launched, without sound or farewell, from the terraces of heaven, and wheeled away into endless space. Sometimes, with the solemn flight of angel wings, they passed through Saharas of darkness, through wildernesses of death, separating worlds of life. Sometimes they swept over frontiers quickening under prophetic motions from God. Then, from a distance, measured only in heaven, light dawned through shapeless film, and in unspeakable space swept to them, and they, with unspeakable quickness, to the light. In a moment the rushing of planets was upon them; in a moment the blazing of suns around them. Then came eternities of twilight, that revealed, but were not revealed. On the right hand and on the left, mighty constellations built up triumphal gates, whose architraves, whose archways, seemed ghostly from infinitude. Without measure were the architraves, past number were the archways, beyond memory the gates. Within were stairs that scaled eternities around, above was below, and below was above to the man stripped of gravitating body. Depth was transcended by height insurmountable, height was swallowed up in depth unfathomable. Suddenly, as thus they rode from infinite to infinite, suddenly, as thus they tilted over abysmal worlds, a mighty cry arose that systems more mysterious, worlds more billowy, other heights and other depths, were

coming, were nearing, were at hand. Then the man sighed and stopped, shuddered and wept. His overladen heart poured itself forth in tears, and he said: "Angel, I will go no farther, for the spirit of man acheth with this infinity. Insufferable is the glory of God. Let me lie down in the grave, and hide me from oppression of the Infinite, for end I see there is none." Then, from all the listening stars that shone around, issued a choral voice: "The man speaks truly—end there is none!" The angel solemnly demanded: "End there is none! Is there, indeed, no end? Is this the sorrow that kills you?" But no voice answered, that he might himself answer. Then the angel threw up his glorious hands towards the heaven of heavens, and said: "To the universe of God there is no end: lo! also, there is no beginning."

The Sublime in Action

There is yet another feature of the sublime which stirs the heart more deeply than anything created by the imagination of the poet or the skill and passion of the artist, and that is the sublime in action. When a great deed, inspired by love, or pity, or patriotism, leaps into light, we are thrilled as by the touch of an angel.

The brutal Roman emperor Claudius commanded

the death of Paetus, the husband of Aria ; on which she first stabbed herself, and then handed the dagger to her husband, with the immortal words, ' Paetus, it does not hurt.'

When the band of conspirators who sought the life of James II of Scotland burst into his lodgings at Perth, the king called to the ladies in the adjoining chamber to keep the door as well as they could, and thus give him time to escape. It was found that the bar of the door had been removed ; on which Catherine Douglas thrust her white arm through the staple, and held it there until it was broken.

When a steamer sailing between Detroit and Buffalo, on which John Maynard was the pilot on board, took fire, he stood at the helm making for the shore until he beached the ship and saved the passengers, while he dropped scorched and blackened on the deck, and his spirit took its flight to God.

On the field of Zutphen Sir Philip Sidney was wounded in the thigh, and, tortured by thirst, called out for water. When the precious cup was handed to him for which he longed so bitterly, he would not drain it, but passed it on to a soldier whose need was greater than his own.

In the battle of Sempach, between the Austrians and the Swiss, the ridge of Austrian spears presented a front so unbroken that the Swiss could not close upon their enemies. Seeing the danger, Arnold von

Winkelried called out, amid the din of the conflict, to his despairing countrymen, 'Follow me, for I will open the way.' On this, he gathered a sheaf of Austrian spears into his own great heart, and the Swiss broke in and secured the victory.

The servant of a Russian noble, deeply devoted to his master and mistress, when a pack of hungry wolves followed the sledge in which they were riding, and threatened destruction to them all, flung himself into the midst of the ravening brutes ; and, while he was being torn to pieces, the noble and his wife reached their home in safety.

In the annals of missionary service, Father Damien devoted himself to the lepers of Molakai, was himself smitten with leprosy, and died a hideous leper for the souls he went to bless.

In the records of diplomacy, General Gordon offered up his lonely and devoted life at Khartoum in the endeavour to teach the nations that mercy is better than sacrifice, and the law of love stronger than Gatling guns or invading armies.

In more recent times, the stewardess of the *Stella*, a steamer wrecked on her way to the Channel Islands, took off her life-belt when the boat was sinking, gave it to an affrighted passenger, and, commending her soul to God, went bravely down into the stern waters.

Still more recently, a poor servant-girl named Alice

Ayres, sleeping over an oil-shop in London, in charge of three children, was startled at three in the morning by the cry of 'Fire!—fire!' When she awoke, she found the tongues of flame were already darting through the chamber floor. One by one she bore the children to the window, and threw them into a blanket stretched out beneath to receive them. She then herself staggered to the window, only to fall scorched and dying amid the shuddering spectators.

Deeds such as these, which, to the credit of humanity, might be largely multiplied, thrill us with a sense of the sublime more stirring and ennobling than any which Nature in her grandest forms could kindle, or Art in her supremest efforts could portray. They bear witness to a majesty in the human soul in virtue of which, when true to itself, it may stand beneath the starry heavens, and in the vision of their bewildering grandeur still exclaim, in the tremendous lines of Wordsworth :

Even here I feel,
Among these mighty things, that as I am
I am akin to God: that I am part
Of the use universal, and can grasp
Some portion of that reason in the which
The whole is ruled and founded: that I have
A spirit nobler in its cause and end,
Lovelier in order, greater in its powers,
Than all these bright and swift immensities.

IV. ABOUT THE CHILDREN

A dreary place would be this earth,
Were there no little children in it ;
The song of life would lose its mirth,
Were there no children to begin it ;
The sterner souls would grow more stern,
Unfeeling natures more inhuman ;
And man to stoic coldness turn,
While woman would be less than woman.

WHITTIER.

WHO of us can escape from the magic and the charm of childhood? Though grey hairs may be upon us, in the presence of the children we renew our youth. Again we hear our father's footstep in the old, sweet home so dear to memory, and again we look into the heaven of our mother's face.

'We love these little people,' wrote Charles Dickens; 'and it is no slight thing when those who are so fresh from God love us.' 'This would be a terrible world, I do think,' said Thomas Binney, 'if it were not for the little children in it.' Mary Howitt says: 'My soul blesses the Great Father every day that He has gladdened the earth with little children.'

Though the years have taught us how much of

evil there is in the world, we can never despair of humanity while we look into the innocent faces of the children. There is always hope for the world because people come into it, not as hardened men, or unworthy women, but as little children.

Children are very largely the salvation of the race. They shame, they refine, they purify, they ennoble us. They keep us from growing cold, and from growing old. They cling to our garments with their tiny fingers, and hold us back from petrification. They win us from hardness and suspicion. We are charmed and rebuked by their innocence, their trustfulness, their heavenly uncaringness. How winsome is the sweet simplicity and trust of unspoilt childhood! When the little Princess of Albany was asked if she was not frightened when she saw a burglar in her room, she replied, 'Oh, no! I thought it was only Father Christmas come back again.'

Dear little folk, how far they have to travel!
Simple little souls, how much they have to learn!
Glad little people, how much they have to suffer!
As we look on their sweet faces and think of our own battle and our own tears, the prayer rises unbidden to our lips, 'God bless and guard the children!' 'O little feet,' says Longfellow—

O little feet, who, through long years,
Must wander on through hopes and fears,
Must ache and bleed beneath your load,

We, nearer to the wayside Inn
Where toil shall cease and rest begin,
Are weary, thinking of your road.

The Possibilities of Childhood

‘What manner of child shall this be?’ was the question asked concerning John the Baptist, when the voice which was to herald the advent of the Son of God was but an infant’s feeble wail. And the same question might be repeated over every cradle. From the lips of the lowliest mother, as she bends over her slumbering child, the lines may fitly fall :

A silent awe is in my room ;
I tremble with delicious fear ;
The future with its light and gloom,
Time and eternity are here.

As the oak sleeps in the acorn ; as the headlong torrent sleeps in the tiny rill ; as music sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale ; as the statue sleeps in the marble block waiting for the genius of the sculptor to set it free—so unmeasured possibilities slumber in the soul of every little child.

Abel the worshipper, and Cain the murderer ;
Moses the man of God, and Pharaoh the oppressor ;
Elijah the prophet, and Ahab the idolater ; Miriam
the prophetess, and Jezebel the serpent ; Nero the
incarnate demon, and Paul the great Apostle ; Wesley
the evangelist, and Voltaire the mocker ; Chalmers

the saviour, and Napoleon the destroyer—all these were children once. In their cradles there slumbered the energy which afterwards went forth for blasting or for blessing in the world.

And so, to-day, these little people playing in the streets, or 'creeping like snail, unwillingly to school,' with their puny bodies, and their souls just awaking to the sense of wonder—these little people are the future world-makers, the new democracy. Theirs are the battles yet to win. Theirs is the page of history yet to fill. In that which we have failed they will succeed. For that which we have wasted they will demand a reckoning. Heirs of the past and moulders of the future, the wonders we have seen are as nothing compared to the marvels which they will behold. How solemn our responsibility!

For, be ye sure, new things will grow,
 As old things change and fade;
 And as we train the children, so
 Is the great future made.

In the light of these truths we may fitly look with trembling awe on every child. The charge of such a creature is the most sacred trust which God can place in our hands. Lowly in birth and lineage the child may be, yet it enshrines all the possibilities of an endless future. Feelings and passions lie folded in that little bosom which demand infinity and eternity for their full development. Lift the

common shell from the beach, apply it to your ear, and it rings with mysterious murmurs of its native sea. So the soul of every little child rings with the cadences of eternity and the whispers of God. 'Fragile beginnings of a mighty end,' we have in the children around us the material from which the church and the nation of the future are to be fashioned—the material from which heaven itself is to be peopled, and the redeeming Christ made glad in the vision of the travail of His soul.

God's Regard for Children

We cannot suppose for an instant that any child comes into the world by chance, or apart from the purpose and the knowledge of the universal Father. If no sparrow falls without His notice, it is certain that no human spirit comes into being divorced from His providence and regard. In the world of Nature we find much which seems to have been given for the joy of children. It is not only a world in which the practical man may sow and reap and gather into barns, or where the poet may find delight amid the shadows of the woodland, or on the marge of the sea. It is also a world where the children find flowers in the daisy-sprinkled meadow, birds among the branches, and streams which go singing through the valley.

In the great Book of God we have also abundant

evidence that the inspiring Spirit had regard to the needs and the capacity of little children—that they lay cradled in the thought of God before they were folded in any mother's arms. Hence the stories, matchless and ever young, which abound in the Bible for the little ones. Note also, with regard to the tender providence of God, how the helplessness of human infancy is met at the door of life by that divinest thing out of heaven—the love of a human mother.

Again, the Child of Bethlehem is the everlasting evidence of God's regard for human childhood. Faber writes :

God gives Himself as Mary's babe
To sinners' trembling arms,
And veils His everlasting light
In childhood's feeble charms.

This implies not merely an act of condescending love on the part of God, but also a mysterious affinity between the human nature and the divine. Only a fundamental similarity between the human and the divine natures could make the Incarnation possible. In that cradled form we learn how sacred human childhood is, and how closely it is related to the highest. Man made in the image of God is the meet preparation for God's assumption of the nature of man. It secures the stock possessing the affinity for that divine graft. This union is not a

union of natures essentially opposed, but of natures correlated to each other. No violence is wrought in the nature of the divine by its union with the human. No new endowment at variance with the previous essential nature of man had to be bestowed to make it possible. It was made possible from the beginning through the similarity of the divine nature and the human.

The goings forth of the Son of God were 'from of old, from everlasting.' The purpose of human redemption was formed before the beginning of years, and it had its well-spring in the heart of the Eternal Father. In the sublimest chapter of ancient prophecy—the 40th chapter of Isaiah—we find it written of the Mighty One who numbers and marshals the stars, that 'He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, and gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom.' That lovely prophecy finds its magnificent fulfilment in the person and the teaching of the Servant He upheld, and in whom His soul delighted, and to whom He imparted His spirit of gentleness and uplifting.

We have but to turn to the 18th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel to learn Christ's estimate of childhood. He first affirms that the heart of childhood is the seat of the kingdom of heaven. The children do not belong to the kingdom of the devil, but to the kingdom of God; and so surely does heaven lie

about them in their infancy that they are, in their chastity and humility, the truest types of sainthood—so truly so, indeed, that those who would enter the kingdom of heaven must become like unto them.

Then we note how the Divine Teacher proceeds to identify the children with Himself: 'Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me.' Love the little child, and Christ reckons your love as shown to Him, because it is shown to the creatures He loves and the creatures who lie nearest Him. On the other hand, wrong the little child, and you inflict on Him a deeper wrong. 'Whoso shall offend one of these little ones . . . it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.' The corrupters of innocence, the destroyers of youth, and not the bruised and betrayed and fallen,—those are the persons on whom rests that terrible infliction, 'the wrath of the Lamb.'

Then we read of the angel of their birth and path, whose presence guards their innocence, or whose pity pleads for them on high; and, finally, we are comforted by the grand assurance, 'It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.'

Thus we have evidence of the love of God for children; and those who stand nearest Him share this divine quality, whether they possess children

of their own or not. The following lines from the pen of Miss Laurence Alma-Tadema seem to us of exquisite sweetness. They could only have been written by a woman.

The children have come out of school,
And dance their way along :
A bird released, each merry fool
Trips homeward with a song.

There's none to seek my door, alas !
But, listening down the street,
I laugh to hear them as they pass
Upon their joyful feet.

The Lord of heaven, who gave me none,
Still bids His mercies fall :
Instead of loving only one,
I now can love them all.

Formative Influences

In child-life we begin with that mystery of personality, which no science has yet explained—that essential nature of the child which is God-given. We are then led to ponder the influences which mould this germinal spirit for good or evil. In doing this, we are first arrested by the important law of heredity, which includes the dispositions and tendencies received by a child from its ancestry, more or less removed. It is an indubitable fact, demonstrated by modern scientific inquiry, that parents transmit physical, mental, and moral dis-

positions and tendencies to their offspring. It is also being admitted by many who study the mystery of mind, that parents may transmit not only natural, but acquired tendencies to their progeny—That, for example, the children of a drunkard may inherit a drunkard's thirst for alcohol, and the children of a sensualist may be born with a bias toward animalism, and the children of a shrew may be cursed by a wellnigh ungovernable temper. Then, fortunately, on the other hand, the pure, the noble, and the heroic mind may stamp its impress on the next generation, and provide an important aid toward the attainment of purity and nobleness. An American humourist says, 'A man needs to be careful how he selects his parents.'

There are numberless children who enter on life severely jeopardized by the failings and vices of their ancestors, while the instances are equally numerous of those whose life-battle with the forces of evil has been rendered easier through their heritage of virtuous qualities and dispositions. It is for this reason that God alone can be the adequate judge of men.

The responsibility of parents in this regard is very clear. It behoves them to remember that their vices or their virtues do not affect themselves alone, but, by an inevitable law, roll over to their offspring. Invested with a power denied to angels—the power

of generating their species and of peopling the world with creatures formed, for good or evil, after their own likeness—parentage assumes attributes of solemn import which it is folly, nay infamy, to disregard. Parents need to think of their children not merely after they are born, but also before they are born. For the sake of their offspring they should live not as they like, but as they ought. The sacrifices they are frequently prepared to make for their little ones when they cluster round the hearth should begin before their innocent eyes have looked upon the light.

A Greek maiden, on being asked what fortune she would bring to her husband, replied, 'I will bring him what gold cannot purchase, a heart unspotted and virtue without a stain—my inheritance from parents who had these, and nothing else, to leave me.' Who will question that this was a heritage more precious than broad acres or hoarded gold? And, moreover, this is a wealth which the lowliest parents may bequeath to their children.

Home Training

The life and character of the child are largely influenced by home training. Olive Schreiner says, with deep truth, 'The first six years of our life make us—all that is added later is only veneer.' To

parents belongs the mighty power of first impressions. They deal with the child in a mouldable condition, when indeed the soul is as wax to receive and as marble to retain. Then it is that the things we are taught grow into the soul. They become a part of its blood and fibre, and cannot afterwards be torn out. Then it is the truths are implanted—

That wake
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy.

Then it is that example makes its strongest and most permanent appeal. In early years the child only knows how to follow and to imitate. It sees through the parents' seeing, believes through the parents' believing, is shaped by the parents' actions. Then it is that the mother's influence is so mighty, because of her deeper affection, and her continual presence with the child. Canon Ainger, who lost his mother in his infancy, pathetically says, 'If any excuse will be allowed to a man at the great Day of Judgement, will it not be to him who can say, "Lord, I never knew my mother"?'

Children become assimilated to that which they admire, and, admiring, emulate. Hence the power of a noble motherhood is immeasurable. As a fact of heredity, children receive more of the essential

nature of the mother than of the father, and her predominance in the home accentuates her power. Fathers may win wealth or position for their children ; but mothers impart character. Biography clearly teaches that it is the mother after whom men are chiefly moulded. The records of Alfred the Great, St. Augustine, Oliver Cromwell, John Wesley, George Washington, William Ewart Gladstone, John Ruskin, with many others who might be named, amply attest this truth. And even in the case of those who have followed vicious courses in spite of the precious heritage of a mother's piety and devotion, the prison chaplain can bear witness that the last thing forgotten by the criminal is the prayer once uttered at a mother's knee. How tender and pathetic those lines from the pen and heart of Thackeray !—

And if, in times of sacred youth,
 We learned at home to love and pray,
 Pray Heaven that early love and truth
 May never pass away.

Care for the children in the home is the very first duty of parents. The mother is generally faithful to her trust. On the other hand, too many fathers are indolent and careless. Home is regarded by them as a haven of release from pressure and responsibility. They do not want to find duties where they seek for rest and recreation. Nothing, however, can make up for the loss of parental in-

fluence on the part alike of father and of mother. The life of the child is largely moulded by the dispositions which consecrate or desecrate its home. If the bud is blighted, what hope can we cherish for the flower?

Moral Culture in Childhood

There are some who hold that moral culture is unnecessary in the case of children. They are of opinion that any interference with the ethical development of the child-mind is harmful rather than helpful. This was the position of Rousseau, who taught that all the evil which appears in children comes from without—that, in other words, our systems of education with regard to the conduct of life are vicious and injurious. He pleaded for a state of so-called unspoilt and uncorrupted nature in which the child should have free development untouched by training and moral culture.

This is the theory which compares the mind in infancy to a sheet of white paper. But we find on inspection that the paper is not white—that there are stains which strike through it and confound us. Where we hoped to find a nature utterly unspoilt we find waywardness, selfishness, and animalism. We find, indeed, a nature warped by a fatal bias toward evil rather than toward good. The passions get the start of the intelligence in the race of life,

and selfishness is already enthroned in the heart, and leads captive the pliant will.

To a friend who pleaded for the education of unassisted nature, Coleridge said, 'Come and see my botanical garden.' The prospect from the back door, however, presented only a piece of waste ground delivered over to dust, weeds, broken bottles, and other rubbish. 'Is this,' said the friend, 'what you call a botanical garden?' The philosopher replied, 'Oh, yes; but you see I have not prejudiced it in favour of plants or flowers, but have left it to pure nature.' How powerful the argument! We cannot leave the children alone. We must expel the evil by bringing in the good. We must pluck out the weeds and plant flowers.

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,—
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.

And these come not by way of nature, but by patient training and wise instruction. The knowledge of good and evil is not native to the soul. Conscience is a wonderful faculty, but it needs light for its development. We need to touch and direct the bias of the life in childhood. The poet says:

A pebble in the streamlet's track
Has changed the course of many a river;
A dew-drop on the baby plant
Has warped the giant oak for ever,

We need to turn the sapling toward the sun, and to direct the stream toward the pure and rejoicing sea. We must see to it that the tree does not perish for lack of light, or the streamlet run to waste in desert sands. That there is nothing in the world worth sinning for; that perfect virtue is the highest element of happiness; that broken laws lead to broken hearts; that it is always, and under all circumstances, better to suffer an injury than to inflict an injury,—truths such as these should be inculcated in childhood—truths which are the very life of the soul, affording it at once the soil in which it may root itself, and the atmosphere in which it may attain its finest growth.

Religious Culture in Childhood

The greatest of the Apostles has left us this counsel with regard to the children: 'Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' Godly nurture is of the very essence of education. True education consists in the drawing forth and development of all the complex faculties with which the child is endowed. Now, of these, its God-ward faculties are the grandest and the most important. It is idle to speak of the education of a child if its spiritual nature is untouched and unregarded.

Its sublimest capacity is, after all, its capacity for God. It is a creature capable of God, inspirable by God, called to union and communion with God. This relation comprises the sublime meaning, the very essence, of its existence. It is its first, its most permanent, and its most magnificent relation. Educate every other faculty and leave this untouched, and the tall pillar is without a capital; the palace is furnished in its dungeons and lower rooms, but the windows which first catch the morning light, and glow with the last colours of the sunset, look in upon apartments which are empty and desolate. Educate every other faculty and leave the religious faculty untouched, and you have taught the young eagle how to walk, but not how to lift its wings above the gates of morning. Care everywhere else, and neglect here, is but a mockery of kindness. 'All the world,' said the great John Ruskin, 'is but an orphanage as long as its children know not God, their Father; and all wisdom and knowledge are but bewildered darkness, if you have not taught them the fear of the Lord.'

Yet further, the child is so constituted that divine truth is fit for the very earliest presentment. Christianity does not appeal to children as atheists, or as brutes, supplying them with the faculties, as well as with the substance of faith. It appeals, as we have already said, to a religious faculty in

the soul, without which its appeal would be as music to the deaf and as light to the blind.

Held our eyes no sunny sheen,
How could sunshine e'er be seen?
Dwelt no power divine within us,
How could God's divineness win us?

But our eyes do hold sunny sheen, answering to the splendour of the sun, and there does dwell in us a power divine through which we may know and commune with our Father who is in heaven. 'Not,' says Wordsworth—

Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy.

The soul of the child is ever winged; a breath stirs it to an upward flight.

It may be urged, and with some show of reason, that the subjects with which religion deals are too mysterious and profound for the child-mind. It is necessary, however, to distinguish between the vital truths of religion and human systems of theology. A system of theology does not constitute religion, though a catechism may be valuable in affording definitions of divine truth. Properly speaking, religion consists only of two great conceptions—a loving and forgiving God revealed in Jesus Christ,

and a life beyond the grave, whose issues are largely shaped by our conduct in the present life.

As the evening shadows gathered round Thomas Carlyle—one of the profoundest of human thinkers—he wrote: ‘The older I grow—and now I stand on the brink of eternity—the more comes back to me the sentence in the catechism which I learned as a child, and the fuller and deeper its meaning becomes: “What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever.”’ ‘And surely this,’ he adds, ‘is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega, of that strange indefinable thing which we call life.’ We may fitly ask, ‘Is this the mighty ocean? is this all?’ Yes! and it is indeed an ocean clasping the world in its arms, and reflecting the pomp of heaven with all its stars. And yet it may be crushed into a chalice for the lips of a child.

One thing is of deep importance with regard to this question, and it is this—that we should present to childhood worthy ideas of God, of His interest in them, His love for them, and His desire for their well-being and happiness. Some of us remember with unspeakable regret how the God whose name is love was presented to us in our infancy under aspects which inspired terror only, and not affection, regard, and childlike trust. We thought of Christ as One who shielded us from the wrath, rather than

as One who revealed for us the compassion, of the Great Father of our spirits, the Father in whom we now rejoice—

As mercy carried infinite degrees
Beyond the tenderness of human hearts.

In that gracious Fatherhood all children should be taught to rejoice. In the work of child-training it is infamy to neglect the Godward culture of the infant soul. How can it grow in beauty if cut off from the Eternal Light? The child's relation to God is the supreme relation of its being, and it must never be forgotten or ignored. We must for ever deprecate a culture that is godless. As Tennyson sings :

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell ;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,
But vaster.

Let the young mind study the facts and laws of Nature, but let it be seen that these facts and laws are but modes of the divine activity and turns of the divine thought. Let Geography tell its story of seas, and rivers, and continents ; but let not Him be forgotten who ' hangeth the earth upon nothing.' Let History repeat its record of falling thrones, and

shattered dynasties, and tumultuous peoples ; but let them not fail to mark above its movements

The only God, the living Will,
Who amid change and ruin rests
A peaceful spirit still.

Let Geology open up for them the deeps of Eternity, but let them remember the mighty utterance, 'In the beginning God.' Let Astronomy open up infinity to their gaze, but let not Him be forgotten 'who made the stars also.' Instruct them if you will concerning the sleepless law of evolution permeating all time, all space, all being ; but let them remember that a movement so subtle and so harmonious demands a divine intelligence. Let Philosophy pursue her quest after the True, the Beautiful, and the Good ; but let it be remembered that these are but shadows of His face. Let Literature make its appeal in the thoughts of great thinkers and the hymns of anointed poets ; but let it be known that from God is the divining spirit in man, and that the inspiration of the Almighty hath given him understanding. And thus let all the echoes of human knowledge and human thought lead up to that mighty Personality whose choral echo is the vast and radiant universe, and to whom we say, when we pray, 'Our Father, who art in heaven.'

V. 'LIFE'S FITFUL FEVER'

From morn till eve things felt and seen
Hold our endangered souls in thrall ;
While, as in some uncertain dream,
We hear the heavenly voices call ;
Through our low range of prison bars
We scarcely see the pilot stars.

R. P. D.

Why dost thou wonder, O man, at the height of the stars, or
the depth of the sea ? Enter into thine own soul and wonder there.

QUARLES.

THE salient feature of modern life is speed. Every year the world is demanding more from its toilers. Every year success in the commercial or the professional world demands more strenuous effort. Never was the battle of life so keen as it is to-day. If Solomon said in his time, 'All things are full of labour,' what would he say if he lived in our time ? What an energy there is in things now ! What an eagerness in human faces ! How fierce and keen are the competitions of life ! How difficult it is for men to keep their brain clear and their feet firm amid the perpetual whirl ! At deep midnight the roar of our great cities is hardly stilled,

and the surging of the multitudes by day makes the individual heart quail. We are amazed at the fullness and the fever of life—the tramp, the hum, the surging tumult, the clash of iron-clad hoofs, the throb of motor-cars, the shriek of engines. ‘Is there any power,’ asks one, ‘in earth beneath or in heaven above that will help us to stop?’

Consider the multitude. The sweat of toil is on their brow. They rise early and sit up late. So oppressed are they with labour they have little time to think and less to worship. No spaces of quiet are kept when the soul is left open for any sweet thought or sacred influence it may please God to send. Unless in hours of sickness, we have no silences in which we may hear the ‘still small voice’ of Deity, no quiet moments in which solemn meditation may ‘take the wheel, and steer us through eternity.’

Even the Sabbath day, in place of being a day for God, is either spent by the multitude in frivolous amusements which enable them to forget their high destiny, or regarded as a welcome pause in the battle during which they may recover their lost energy and be prepared to plunge again into the fevered strife. There is no doubt that we *do* more, but the great peril is that *doing* should be considered everything and *being* nothing. In the busy markets of the world souls are on sale, and heavenly music is drowned in earthly noises. Abraham sat at his

tent door waiting for the angels. Men wait for them no more, and if they were to come they would find them too busy to heed the message which they bring.

Meanwhile, in the vast majority of cases, the success won is not worth the price that is paid for it. Men who succeed in business have to give up their entire life to the mastery of its details and the regulation of its course, and thereby lose all capabilities for a better life—all relish for contemplation and self-culture, all joy in nature, all delight in books, and all fitness for the sanctities which elevate them to the full stature of what God intended them to be. 'Have you time to die, sir?' was the home question of a London physician to a patient, a lawyer in full practice, who was making excuses for not taking his prescription of rest and freedom from anxious business cares.

We are well aware the excuse is, that this excess of toil is unavoidable—that you must keep pace, or fall behind and be trampled down by the hungry and ambitious throng behind. The pathetic plea is—

Each day brings its petty dust,
Our soon-choked souls to fill;
And we forget because we must,
And not because we will.

We are willing to admit the force of this plea, willing also to acknowledge that business has its

appointed duties which serve the designs of Providence in every corner of the earth. What we deplore is that the claims of the inner life should be ignored because the claims of the outer life are so loud and so unceasing—that the craving for outward things should hinder the inward workings and aspirations of the soul.

‘For most men,’ says Matthew Arnold—

For most men in a brazen prison live,
Where in the sun’s best eye,
With heads bent o’er their toil, they languidly
Their minds to some unmeaning taskwork give,
Dreaming of nought beyond their prison wall.

We admire and revere the old builders who planted our cathedrals in the centre of the city, amid the tumults of the market, and the traffic of the shops, and the shouting of the show-men outside the booths where pleasure invited the toiler to forget for an hour his strenuous endeavour. All the while the grand cathedral doors stood open that men might enter at will, to tread with echoing feet the pavement beneath which the dead were sleeping, to gaze on the mighty pillars planted as if for eternity, to take wing with the soaring anthem into heavenly places, and to contemplate in delighted wonder the windows richly dight with dedicated shapes of kings and saints—

Each the bright gift of some mechanic guild,
Who loved their city, and thought gold well spent
To make her beautiful with piety.

So from the 'city's heat and din, the common crush of life, the hurry from task to task,' the traffic of the market and the dust of the street, we do well to retire into the holy places in which the soul is enriched, refreshed, and uplifted, by the hallowed sanctities of prayer, the healing silences of meditation, and the lofty inspirations of immortal hope.

We need to learn the lesson taught by Emerson where he says, 'All power is in silent moments.' Every great deed the memory of which is preserved in human records was accomplished in the silence of some brain and heart before the instruments which made the world aware of the victory came into action. As the flame is not the real fire, but the sign and outcome of the fire, so accomplishment is not the real force, but the sign and outcome of the force. The real crucifixion was in Gethsemane. Waterloo was won in Wellington's tent. 'The Angelus' was painted in Millet's brain. All great causes in all the worlds are ever silent, and ever silently conceived. Water which swirls and foams admits of no reflection. It is the still lake which mirrors heaven with all its stars. 'Be still, and know that I am God.' Still, because in no other way can you come into intelligent and vital touch with the unseen Infinite. The 'still small voice' is not heard amid the clamour of the crowd, but

in the haunts of silence, where meditation deepens into awe.

This was one of the lessons which Matthew Arnold sought to impress upon the mind and heart of his generation. He rebuked its fever and unrest, its narrow range of interests, its proneness to a fettering materialism, and pleaded for nobler living and finer being. He deprecated a life without unity, a life of cares, hopes, fears, desires, opinions, business, passions which arise and wane with the accidents of each successive day and hour. To live too fast, to be perpetually harassed, to be dulled by toil, to be made wild with passion, to adapt ourselves to every view of truth in turn and never to see truth with lucidity and as a whole, to yield to the chance allurements of the time and place and never to possess our souls before we die—this he deplored amid the crowded and hurrying action of our fevered civilization. He sang :

But we, brought forth and reared in hours
Of change, alarm, surprise,
What shelter to grow ripe is ours?
What leisure to grow wise?

.

Too fast we live, too much are tried,
Too harassed to attain
Wordsworth's sweet calm, or Goethe's wide
And luminous view to gain.

Where are the dear old-fashioned breathing-spells of life, when we listened to the ticking of the clock and marked the foot-falls of departing time? When we numbered the passing hours, we found them restful and educative. We have little left now but the gift of being bored by silence.

Fugitives from Themselves

Everywhere we find in these hasting days that men are fugitives from themselves. They cannot bear to live alone with themselves—that is, with their own souls. Any occupation or amusement, however trivial its nature, is welcomed if it will only enable them to forget themselves. When they go to their business or return from it, they must have the morning or the evening paper, or their journey becomes irksome and disturbing. In the evening, dinner, with its accompaniment of some intoxicant, blunts for a time the thinking faculty, and after it a novel, or a game of cards, or the flight to some place of entertainment, relieves them from the burden of thought and from the uneasiness occasioned by the slightest degree of introspection. We have read of a sportsman who gave up hunting because he found waiting by the covert-side, with nothing to do but think, quite unbearable. If he could have had a friend to talk to, or a book to read, till the hounds got away, all would have been right. The

trouble was to be condemned to some form of quiet thinking.

We that acquaint ourselves with every zone,
And pass both tropics, and behold the poles ;
When we come home are to ourselves unknown,
And unacquainted still with our own souls.

Thus multitudes of men go on from month to month, and from year to year, avoiding the sessions of solitary thought, until death closes all, and eternity bursts on them as a great surprise. Any device is seized with avidity which enables them to ignore 'the haunting oracles which stir our clay,' and to shut the door on God and the transcendent future. They are afraid of their own greatness, and persistently avoid the consideration of its sublime relations and its essential needs. It is because of this lack of serious thought that we find in the souls of men so many empty places where great things ought to be, so many desires which break themselves upon nothingness, and such a wealth of capacity which either runs to absolute waste or is expended on the merest trifles.

La Bruyère says, 'The misfortunes of men proceed from their inability to be alone ; from gaming, riot, extravagance, dissipation, envy, and forgetting God and themselves.' Another lofty thinker says, 'There can be no equable, sufficing happiness except in a self-ruled and withdrawn spirit—a spirit that in the

idea of God, busy with impersonal and eternal objects, in dear retirement, reposes on great hopes of truth, nobleness, and peace. As such a spirit goes on his way alone, his pent-up walk—

Widens beyond the circle of the stars,
And all the sceptred spirits of the past
Come thronging in to greet him as their peer.’

The Higher Life

On the highest authority we have it that ‘man shall not live by bread alone.’ Bread is good and necessary, bread for ourselves, bread for our children; but we cannot live by bread alone. We have a higher existence than that of the perishing body. We have other and nobler needs than those which bread can satisfy. When the clamorous animal circle of our nature is fed and stilled, our spiritual being still uplifts its cry of hunger and its appeal of thirst for some higher word or gift of God. Man must not invest his life in bread, but convert bread into higher life. The soul is not made for the body, but the body for the soul. The inner life must not consume itself away in providing for the outward and the physical; for the physical life is temporal, the incident and necessity of time, while the inner life is eternal, and tramples on the passing shows of time. Freed by fitting

contemplation from the trammels of earth and the accidents of the passing hour, we should ascend—

From the gifts unto the giver,
And from the cistern to the river,
And from the finite to infinity,
And from man's dust to God's divinity.

But we remain on the lower levels, and do not climb the heights where the earthly voices die away and the great silences bring their appeal of grandeur. By our fitful fever and impatient haste, life is frivolized and robbed of its diviner meanings.

To begin with, *our reading is less thoughtful and ennobling*. Our fathers read fewer books than we, but they were of better quality. Charnock and Howe, Burton and Hooker, Milton and John Foster, are scarcely more than empty names to the present generation of readers. Literature as one of the instruments for forming character, or in other words, for creating a vigorous and self-respecting manhood, has almost ceased from its great office. 'Books,' said John Milton, 'contain a progeny of life in them to be as active as the soul whose progeny they are.' But great life can only be imparted by great souls, and it is just such souls that are now unnoticed and unregarded. The busy crowds of our time read only for amusement, and not for instruction. They have no leisure for great books, and no desire for them, and the devourer of second-

rate fiction becomes as feeble and frivolous as that on which he feeds.

Again, *our imaginative life in these onward-hasting days is enfeebled and repressed.* That splendid faculty which lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world and reveals the divine side of familiar things is being starved and etiolated. The souls that wonder and admire grow fewer. We are confronted with a busy crowd whom Nature never startles, whom the starry heavens do not elevate, and whom the ocean does not stir. The woods and hills and streams are their playground when they escape from the dusk and dust of towns and cities, but they are not conscious amid their changeful beauty of—

A presence that disturbs them with the joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean and the living air.

That power of enthusiasm and ennobling awe which asks, 'Who is it that polishes the eye of the antelope, paints the rainbow on the cloud, and as often as night returns sets on her sable brow the silent crown of stars?' is in danger of fading from our midst.

Yet further, our friendships are less hearty and enduring. In the bitter haste and greed of life our

associates are regarded as rivals rather than sought as companions with whom we delight to change souls. Again, with regard to friends at a distance, the spirit of the age has either destroyed the art of letter-writing or driven it into mercenary channels, and thus our friendships are not nourished or maintained. We permit them to die of inanition. We are too busy to retain them.

Our home affections also are less intimate and tender in these onward-hasting days. The links which bind us to those we love and by whom we are in turn beloved are slighter than they were half a century ago and more easily snapped. Men have less communion with their wives and children. The fire on the household altar does not present so steady and secure a flame. Our fathers were wont to live where their business lay, but in these days of city toil and suburban dwellings men are too little at home. In many cases they see their little children only for a few hours on Sunday, or when they are curled up in sleep, and when they reach home after the stress and strain of business hours intimate social fellowship with their wives is but feebly realized. All this is fatal to those sweet humanities by which the heart is watered and enriched.

By love subsists
All lasting grandeur—by pervading love ;
That gone, we are as dust.

Sabbath Sanctities

Finally, and as we think fatally, the sanctities of worship are not maintained as once they were. In the press of life the Sabbath is being regarded more and more as a day of rest rather than as a day of worship, and we are bereft of the great truths which give grandeur to the beatings of the heart and link us with the divine and the eternal. We miss the themes which lend—

A deeper transport and a mightier thrill
Than comes of commerce with mortality.

The week-end holiday often separates us from the familiar places of our worship, where deep of feeling calls unto deep, and the starry legions beckon us onward, led by the hymns of praise and the litanies of prayer.

Ah! there is something here
Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer;
A seed of sunshine that can leaven
Our earthly dullness with the beams of heaven,
And glorify our crumbling clay
With light from fountains elder than the day;
A light across the tossing, changeful sea,
Which haunts the soul, and will not let it be
A stranger to its higher destiny.

Oh for a deeper conviction that amid life's fitful fever we need to gather the riches of eternity for the ennobling of the poverty of time! We must

be careful lest amid our strenuous labour for the things which perish in the using we do not miss the grand end of our being, which is the marriage of our souls with God, that they may be united to Him for ever. Far be it from us to depreciate the value and the merit of honest endeavour in the daily battle. But we must not forget that something more is needed for our human life. We are not born to be mere machines for turning out a certain amount of work. We are not intended to be merely the drudges of business or the slaves of Mammon. We are born to think, to admire, to love, to aspire, to worship. We must not allow the noises of the world to drown within us the cry of the spirit which pleads for eternity. A fortune in broad lands or hoarded gold, a position among the privileged and titled of the earth,—these are not the first things in life, in spite of the lying world which tells us that they are. Years sweep by us like the wind, and rob us of our strength as the autumn gales scatter the leaves of the woodland. In a little while there will be nothing left to us but God and the character which we have impressed upon our souls through the choices of our will and the nature of our acts. As a temple or a hovel that character is rising day by day, the outward circumstances and occupations of our life being the scaffolding behind which it is reared. At the touch

of the angel of eternity that scaffolding will blend with the dust, and the character we have formed in its beauty or its deformity will confront the Judge of all.

Let us then 'gird up our loins and be sober,' counting our common days eternal days because of the issues which wait upon our thoughts and acts.

Forenoon, and afternoon, and night! Forenoon,
And afternoon, and night! Forenoon, and—what!
The empty song repeats itself. No more?
Yea, that is life: make this forenoon sublime,
This afternoon a psalm, this night ■ prayer,
And time is conquered, and thy crown is won.

VI. CRITICS AND CRITICISM

What, then, is Taste but those internal powers
Active, and strong, and feelingly alive
To each fine impulse? A discerning sense
Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust
From things deformed, or disarranged, or gross
In species? This, nor gems, nor stores of gold,
Nor purple state, nor culture can bestow,
But God alone, when first His sacred Hand
Imprints the secret bias on the soul.

AKENSIDE.

If we wish to learn the force of human genius, we should read Shakespeare. If we wish to see the insignificance of human learning, we may study his commentators.—HAZLITT.

THE present may be defined as a critical age, and it is largely critical because it is not creative. Unable to produce great works, the writers of our time are chiefly busied in examining and analysing works already produced in more fertile periods. And it is without question that the critic has a province of special importance in Literature. He cuts off from our serious attention a vast amount of inferior writing, and thus rescues us from a waste of time and energy. He teaches us to discriminate between the echo and the voice, between the real thing and the pale imitation. He also

discovers and reveals things of first-rate excellence to which our eyes have hitherto been sealed. He acts as a sentinel in the great army of letters, challenging new authors and approving or disputing their entrance into the ranks. The *kritikos* is the discerner, the man who distinguishes the gold from the tinsel, the jewel from the paste. We are well aware that Time is, after all, the great critic; but we so speedily see our hour and pass, that we cannot wait for its decisions.

‘Literature,’ says one, ‘is a garden, books are particular views of it, and readers are visitors. Much of their pleasure depends on the guides. It is very important to obtain the assistance of those who are familiar with the beauties they show, and able, from feeling and practice, to appreciate lights and shades and colours.’

Now, the true guide treads the garden reverently, and as one who loves it. He does not dissect the rose to prove its beauty, but leaves it folded in its own sweet way. He has a keen scent for spiritual aromas, and leads us to the hidden places from which they are breathed, as from violets drooping in the shade.

By odours led, to flowers unseen
We come: their beauty peeps between
As the wind stirs the foliage green;
Thus subtly Love draws onward youth,
Thus Sages win us to their truth.

The object of literary criticism is very simple. It is to teach men to distinguish the best books, and to enable them to read them with inward vision. Some books are written with a clarity, a pathos, and a power, which may be universally felt and recognized. They are open alike to the philosopher and the peasant. Others, again, are fraught with profound and mystic meanings which veil them from ordinary observation. They appeal chiefly to the educated taste, and depend on it for the unfolding of their finest message and their sublimest aim. It is in such cases that the critic serves us, bringing dim meanings into light, and reading for us the mystic yet illuminative scroll. Concerning many master minds it may be said that—

Dark with excessive light their skirts appear.

For this reason we need the eagle vision of a mind which can confront the brightness and soften it for our feebler gaze. Isaiah and Job, Homer, Aeschylus, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, Victor Hugo, all stand in this category among the immortals.

Yet further, it is a noble office of the critic to reveal unknown excellence and to bring the great writer more speedily to his own. How many who have 'scorned delights and lived laborious days' for our profit go down to the grave unrecognized and uncrowned! Known to a limited circle of readers,

they are yet to the general mass unknown. They decline and die without enjoying the recognition and the fame which they have so honestly earned and so richly deserved. The garlands which should rest upon their brows are reserved for their sepulchres. Instances such as those of Shelley, William Blake, William Hazlitt, and Richard Jefferies, illustrate what we mean. Now it is the office of the critic to snatch such men from obscurity while living, and to rescue them from oblivion when dead. They are revived and presented as—

A glory and a substance to the world.

Requisites of the Critic

The great and essential requisites of the critic are correct taste, wide culture, an ardent love of beauty, and that imperial faculty which we indicate by the term imagination. Taste may be defined as that faculty of the mind by which we instinctively discover and appreciate the beautiful in works of the imagination and the elegant arts. It may be improved by culture, but it is essentially, as Akenside observes, a 'bias of the soul' given by the hand of God. It has been ably defined as a kind of extempore judgement. It realizes at a flash the distinction between the fit and the unfit, the beautiful and the unbeautiful. In its finest and keenest manifestations it is not a common gift, but a rare

endowment, kindling spontaneously into love and admiration.

In the realm of Nature and of Art an appreciative taste may claim to be instinctive and spontaneous ; but in that of Literature it demands a course of study over a wide field of authorship. Here the influence of the best books is a potent factor in the formation of its judgements. Without this influence it cannot obtain that breadth of vision which is essential to its proper exercise. The literary critic, to become a master of his craft, must have formed an acquaintance more or less intimate with most of the great minds which have enlightened and gladdened the world. He must have stood under the Chaldean night with Job, coursed along the plains of Troy with Homer, dreamed with the ancient mystics of Hindostan, mused with Plato in the garden or conversed with Socrates in the market-place, shuddered with Dante in the Inferno, walked with Milton in Paradise, communed with Shakespeare at Elsinore, in Venice, in Verona, or amid the oaks of Windsor, and shared with joy and wonder the fellowship of Burns and Scott, Shelley and Keats, with a host of others whom we delight to honour. Without this, he cannot sit in judgement on the work of a true artist in literature. He lacks the knowledge by which such a work may be appraised.

Imagination

Yet further, the literary critic should possess the discerning and illuminative faculty of imagination. This faculty is not the offspring of unreasoning frenzy, but, 'in truth,' as Wordsworth teaches,

Is but another name for absolute power,
And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,
And Reason in her most exalted mood.

The power of worthily appreciating a great literary effort is only second to that required for its production. Only a poet can fully understand and fitly appraise a poet. Well is it said, that 'the jury which sits in judgement on a poet, belonging as he does to all time, must be composed of his peers; it must be impanelled by time from the selectest of the wise of many generations.' The critic should first understand, and then criticize. A work of imagination is a closed book to a commonplace mind. Wings are needed to follow the true poet,

Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air.

Poetry is, in all its forms, the language of imagination and passion, and its meaning cannot be discerned by the frigid and pedantic mind. The critic must *be*, that he may *see*. He must possess the quality of soul, otherwise he may mar the beauty given

for our delight. Hazlitt says : 'Let the naturalist, if he will, catch the glow-worm, carry it home with him in a box, and find it next morning nothing but a little grey worm. Let the poet or the lover of poetry visit it at evening, when, beneath the scented hawthorn and the crescent moon, it has built itself a palace of emerald light.' A critic needs to be something more than an author who has failed. The mind of such a man is full of envy, and envy, as Coleridge said, 'dwarfs and withers its worshippers.' To quote again from Wordsworth :

Minds which have nothing to confer
Find little to perceive.

Saint-Beuve, the greatest of French critics, cherished a high conception of the duty of a critic, and it would be well if others would study his methods. He found out everything about the author he was dealing with, down to the minutest details. He tried, so to speak, to get inside him. He then produced a life-like portrait, so that, when we have once read a criticism from his pen on any writer, he lives in our minds as Saint-Beuve painted him. In his criticisms ideality is found side by side with reality, poetry with science. He had also this other beautiful quality, that he was as swift to praise as to discern. His criticisms were, indeed, best expressed by the word appreciations, and all

the finest criticisms are of this noble quality. 'The vulture,' says one, 'pounces upon carrion with a cry of obscene satisfaction; but the lark soars toward the sunrise with a song of worship.'

The gift of a genuine power to admire is one of the very finest endowments of a critic. The heroic General Wolfe, with the fatal heights of Abraham before him, declared of Gray's 'Elegy': 'I would prefer being the author of that poem, to the glory of beating the French to-morrow.' Hazlitt said of that line in 'Laodamia,'

Elysian beauty, melancholy grace:

'I would as soon have written that line as have carved a Greek statue.'

Blunders in Criticism

Our literature abounds with examples of egregious blunders on the part of would-be critics. Waller, the poet, writing at the time of the publication of 'Paradise Lost,' said: 'Milton, the old blind school-master, has written a poem on the fall of man, remarkable for nothing but its extreme length.' Another critic of that age called Milton 'the author of a profane and lascivious poem entitled "Paradise Lost."' Jeffrey, of *The Edinburgh Review*, turning over the pages of Wordsworth, paused at the magnificent 'Ode on the Intimations of Immortality in

Childhood,' and cried: 'This is beyond doubt the most illegible and unintelligible part of the publication,' and then actually quoted the sublimest lines in the whole poem to prove his own imbecility. Macaulay wrote of Wordsworth's 'Excursion':

Scarce one beauty shines
In the dry desert of a thousand lines.

A critic, so-called, in one of Chambers's Tracts, instances the following three verses as a glaring specimen of the nonsensical puerility in Wordsworth:

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half-hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be:
But she is in her grave, and, oh!
The difference to me.

After a savage onslaught on this great seer and interpreter of Nature, a critic said, 'We have thus crushed Wordsworth.' To this Southey replied, 'Crush Wordsworth! You might as well attempt to crush Skiddaw.'

Denham placed Fletcher above Shakespeare as

a dramatist. Voltaire called the creator of Hamlet and the greatest of all poets 'a drunken savage.' Coleridge saw no good in Sir Walter Scott, characterizing his best novels as 'wretched abortions.' Horace Walpole called Dante 'extravagant, absurd, and disgusting.' Dr. Johnson said that Gray was a very dull, and Swift a very shallow, fellow. Of Coleridge's 'Ancient Mariner,' his friend Southey said, 'It is the clumsiest attempt at German simplicity I ever saw.' In Landor's view, Gibbon was 'an old dressed-up fop.' Ruskin was at first greeted by the critics with unmeasured ridicule, and Carlyle was denounced as a mountebank. Professor Edward T. Channing, then regarded as the highest literary authority in New England, described Tennyson as 'a great calf.' Another critic tells us that Tennyson's 'In Memoriam' conveys to his mind no impression of reality or truthfulness; and, when he comes to 'Maud,' he cries out, 'O dear, dear! What manner of stuff is this?' Tennyson's lines are appropriate here:

Vex not thou the poet's mind
With thy shallow wit:
Vex not thou the poet's mind,
Thou can'st not fathom it.

Fault-finding in Criticism

A genuine book is one of Heaven's best gifts to men, and it is irritating to note how some critics

pass judgement in an hour on a work which has been the effort of a lifetime. It is still more irritating to find that the habit of many of them is to extract the faults of a book and leave the reader to find out its beauties. Very often they write merely to show their own cleverness, and are delighted if they have been able to find some flaw in composition, some mistake in a date, or some error in a quotation ; while, not infrequently, passages which by their imaginative brilliance delight the general reader, are described as 'purple patches.' We do not quarrel with them when they condemn vulgarity, rebuke shallow conceit, chastise the scribbler who substitutes glitter for sense, or denounce the offender against decency and morality. What we detest is the reluctance of many of our critics to acknowledge and applaud real merit, and their insult offered to 'the souls who have made our souls wiser.' Fault-finding is, after all, a very subordinate accomplishment ; and a detective in the realm of letters is as little desirable as a companion as a detective in ordinary life. 'Of unwise admiration,' says Thomas Carlyle, 'much may be hoped, for much good is really in it ; but unwise contempt is itself a negation—nothing comes of it, for it *is* nothing.'

The brain of a critic should be wise enough to form a correct judgement, and his heart generous enough to pronounce it. 'Criticism,' says R. A.

Wilmott, 'must never be sharpened into anatomy.' The eye of the professional critic is apt to become too microscopic. He is in danger of taking in only parts and atoms of a subject, instead of surveying the whole. It is as though a man should tear a full-blown rose to pieces, and, when its petals are scattered on the ground, ask us to note its perfume, or admire its form. It is invariably small-minded or mean-spirited men who are fault-finders only, and sometimes to their native mediocrity is added the malignity which springs from personal failure. Says Shakespeare :

The adder hisses where the sweet birds sing.

Dante affirmed that much which he had written could not be understood except by one who was 'in like degree the liegeman of love.'

Criticism and Appreciation

The true and worthy critic is not a mere 'lion seeking whom he may devour,' but the 'guide, philosopher, and friend' of all who love the pleasant paths of literature and who delight to wander therein. His desire and pride is not to find defect, but to discover hidden beauty, and reveal it for our joy and our uplifting. To adapt to our purpose some words of Talfourd in praise of Hazlitt, that prince of British critics, 'His fitness for his office

is displayed in the intense admiration and love which he feels for the great authors, on whose excellence he delights to dwell. With a hand tremulous with mingled joy and reverence, he draws aside the veil of Time, and descants, with kindling enthusiasm, on all the delicacies of that picture of genius which he discloses.' Admiration is the sign of a lofty intellect served by a noble heart.

The true critic is the rescuer, the adviser, the protector, and the applauder of merit. He acts as interpreter in the fair palace of literature. He is a revealer of the true, the beautiful, and the good. To apprehend poetic beauty in its pure essence is not easy, but difficult; and it is here that the true critic finds his opportunity. He mediates between creative genius and the ordinary mind. He kindles his torch at the heavenly altar, and throws its light upon the highways of the human world. Without such mediums and interpreters the ordinary reader would know but little of the mightiest minds, while stars of lesser magnitudes would hang on the horizon's verge unseen.

How much we owe to our great writers !

In long procession calm and beautiful

they pass before the inward eye, and as from sacred oracles distil celestial wisdom. By their fellowship

our common life is dignified, and we reach out after the life eternal. We accumulate what is lovely, and by the law of affinity become assimilated thereunto. We taste—

Unwearied joy, and life without its cares.

VII. THINGS I CAN DO WITHOUT

Serene I fold my hands and wait,
Nor care for wind, or tide, or sea ;
I rave no more 'gainst Time or Fate,
For lo ! my own shall come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays,
For what avails this eager pace ?
I stand amid the eternal ways,
And what is mine shall know my face.

The waters know their own, and draw
The brook that springs in yonder heights ;
So flows the good with equal law
Unto the soul of pure delights.

JOHN BURROUGHS.

Set a bound to your desires. Think not of how much others have, but of how much which they have you can do perfectly well without. Be not the slave of show or circumstance.—SIR THEODORE MARTIN.

SOME time ago I went to dine with a friend, a successful merchant, in a southern suburb of London. On reaching the house I found a carriage-and-pair, a recent purchase, waiting at the door, and was invited to take a drive before dinner. Through a lovely country the horses pranced to the sound of silver bells, until as we ascended a long

slope a motor-car flashed down upon us. The horses took fright and plunged wildly, threatening utter wreck. Fortunately the driver kept his nerve, and, having quieted in some degree the startled animals, allowed them to race up the hill until they had spent their fire. We returned to the house in safety, but in serious mood. Impressed by my silence, my friend said, 'What are you thinking about?' I replied, 'I was thinking I would write a paper on things I can do without.' He gave answer, 'I suppose a carriage-and-pair is one of them?' 'Decidedly,' I replied; and there the incident ended.

After dinner we sat in the garden with a full summer moon silvering the trees and steeping all things in quietness, while in a copse beyond the garden-wall two nightingales were warbling to each other. Again we fell into silence, feeling as if talk would be a trespass amid such enchantment. Ere long the question was repeated by my friend, 'What are you thinking about?' I replied, 'I was thinking how inexpensive our most exquisite pleasures are.'

It is a part of wisdom to consider not only the things which might prove enjoyable if they were but attainable, but also what things we can do without. How many people we meet in comfortable circumstances, with all their legitimate needs supplied, who

yet chafe and fret because others around them luxuriate in an abundance which they cannot boast ! Some again are filled with envy because certain of their acquaintances enjoy honours, municipal, national, or scholastic, which they have not won ; while others—for the most part women—are a prey to unrest and disappointment because some of their neighbours move in a circle of society from which they are excluded.

How foolish is all this if we have bread enough and to spare, if our reputation is good with those who know us best, and if our home relations are sweet, peaceful, and unsullied ! Surely the rest are things we can do without.

Many things which we covet in life are merely *impedimenta*, as the Romans called their baggage—only a burden and a care, and not something to rejoice in at all.

Because we are born for immortality, our desires are enormously in excess of our real requirements, and the more of this world's goods we possess the more we want. 'He that needs the fewest things,' says a great thinker, 'is the richest man, and comes nearest to the fullness of God Himself, who wants nothing.' If we pamper our wishes they multiply like snow-flakes, and, like snow-flakes, the final end of most of them is the mire beneath our feet.

An English dramatist has said with deep truth :

Oh, we are querulous creatures! Little less
Than all things can suffice to make us happy :
And little more than nothing is enough
To make us wretched.

Wealth

An American writer says, 'The population of the civilized world to-day may be divided into two classes—millionaires and those who would like to be millionaires. Artists, poets, and thinkers do not count.' This may be an exaggeration of the position, but it is unquestionable that the vast majority of people think that all they need to secure happiness is plenty of money.

Now, while it is mere folly and affectation to pretend to despise money, with the comforts and influence it commands, it is needful to remember that because money is mighty it is not therefore almighty. Some of the very best things in life elude its grasp. It may win reputation, but it cannot purchase character. It may command the homage of a sycophant, but it cannot secure the affection of a friend. Cosmetics it may buy, but it cannot place a line of glory on a man's brow, or chisel a curve of beauty on a woman's face. How coarse and cruel is Watts's portrait of Mammon ! How hideous the face, how repellent the eye, how gross and sensual the lips ! There is a whole for-

gotten world of strength, and beauty, and attractiveness to which mere wealth possesses no key. It is the want of imagination, and of a simple, appreciative, and receptive soul, which debars a man from finding delight in simple pleasures—the pleasures which come to us on tiny wings. It is interesting in this regard to watch a child at play. It is marvellous what imagination does for this little poet, what visions of delight it creates for itself out of sticks, and stones, and straws, and flowing water. But we lose the child-mind, and, becoming *blasé*, lose our joy in little things. Lecky, the historian, wisely says, ‘The value of money as an element in happiness diminishes rapidly in proportion to its amount. In the case of the humbler fortunes each accession brings with it a large increase of pleasure and comfort. In the instance of the rich man this is not the case, and of colossal fortunes only a very small fraction can be truly said to minister to the personal enjoyment of the owner.’

A friend of the writer asked one of the wealthiest men in Yorkshire, who had risen from the ranks, when the increase of his wealth ceased to give him any further satisfaction. He replied, ‘My wealth ceased to furnish me with any new delight after I had been able to secure a good riding-horse. From my youth up I had a strong desire to possess one,

and since I have secured it my money has not availed to purchase me an added pleasure.'

What wealthy man finds half the delight in a folio bound in vellum which he has purchased without feeling the cost, which Clare, the peasant-poet, found when, after the most careful economy of his pence, he secured a copy of Burns for one-and-sixpence? In the days of his poverty it was an unspeakable delight for Charles Lamb to secure a treasure in the form of a coveted volume from some second-hand book-shop. Afterwards, in his more prosperous days, he writes to his sister Mary: 'A purchase is but a purchase now. We have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury, we were used to have a debate *for* and *against*, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then when we felt the money that was paid for it.'

If a wealthy man looks thoughtfully round on his possessions, he will be surprised to find how few of them there are which have yielded him a pleasure at all proportioned to their cost. The world-weary Madame Pompadour wrote: 'I have furnished my house in Paris anew, but it amused me only two days.' A child's kiss would have been more precious than all her magnificent upholstery.

Again, we are apt to forget the price a man must pay in the surrender of simple and exquisite joys of another order for the getting and keeping of the yellow dust which men call gold.

Men exaggerate the advantages of wealth and forget its manifold cares. Many a rich man finds himself in possession, but not capable of enjoyment. He is greatly fettered, although his fetters are of gold. He has no time for the pleasures which he hoped his wealth would enable him to command. Science, art, and literature, with their power to broaden and uplift, find him too busy to pay them homage. If he goes for a holiday, finance intrudes on his sunshine, and the hum of the Exchange blends with the song of the sea. Altogether his condition is far less enviable than most people imagine.

From the French of Theodore de Banville we select the following humorous stanzas on

The Poverty of Rothschild

The other day, in vain awaiting the receipt
 Of cash for that and this,
 I could not choose but weep for thinking in the street
 Of how poor Rothschild is.

Without a rap I was, propped up against a post,
 Like any beggar base;
 And yet, above all else, that which concerned me most
 Was Rothschild's sorry case.

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While, taking lute or fife, I follow Fancy's flight,
 Where'er the baggage gads,
 He, convict of the desk, divorced from all delight,
 Figure to figure adds.

Each day he reckons up that fabulous amount
 Of his, his milliards twain;
 And if the wretched man but farthings two miscount,
 He must begin again.

Oh, how poor Rothschild is! He never has the meads
 Seen, where the sun shines bright.
 The true rich man for me the poet is, who needs
 But sun and air and light.

Sir Henry Taylor says in one of his essays: 'You would think, to hear the eulogy of the moralist or preacher, that the lives of people in the upper classes were something really comfortable, genial, and beautiful. To me, on the contrary, since my first entrance into society, the life of those who are considered to be the most highly favoured by the god of this world has always appeared poor, mean, joyless, and in some respects even squalid. There is a singular inaptitude of means to ends, which prevails generally throughout the human aids and appliances for living. I mean dress, houses, equipages, and household furniture. The result is, I believe, that more than half of what we do to procure good is needless or mischievous; in fact, that more than half of the labour and capital of the world is wasted in savage life by not knowing

how to compass what is necessary, in civilized life by the pursuit of what is needless.'

'The best wealth,' said St. Clement, 'is the poverty of desire.' Socrates said, as he passed through the market-place at Athens, 'How many things are here which I do not need!' The same thing may be said by most of us as we pass through the market-place of life—where men buy and sell, and wrestle for the mastery, and break down beneath the strain, and exhaust every energy of their being in the pursuit of things which perish in the using. What is sufficient for decency and comfort is enough for the wise. What is it to me that my neighbour lives more sumptuously than I, if I have food convenient? If I have a good brick house to shield me from the weather, what is it to me that my neighbour covers his with stucco and Corinthian pillars?

St. Paul exhorts us, having food and raiment, therewith to be content. If we followed his advice we should extinguish wellnigh every fever which infests the human heart. The conditions of real happiness are very common and very simple: food and raiment; congenial work; a few friends; honour, with its lovely daughter, self-respect; faith in God—that is all.

The Perils of Wealth

Furthermore, while the advantages of wealth are fully recognized, its perils are almost utterly dis-

regarded. One of our bishops said only recently, 'It is a misfortune for a boy to be born where a family lives in one room, but it is a greater misfortune for a boy to be born of wealthy and foolish parents.' Some sigh that they were not born with the proverbial silver spoon in their mouths ; but that spoon has choked more youths than it has ever ennobled, while biography abounds with the records of men who 'came into the world mud, and went out of it marble.'

When Mahomet reached the gate of Damascus and saw the wealth and loveliness of the place, he turned away, saying, 'I dare not trust myself in such a garden of the gods.' When the son of William Carey abandoned missionary work in India for an important post in the Government, the veteran said, 'Alas! my son has dwindled from a missionary to an ambassador.' When President Van Buren heard that his son had become engaged to a lady of affluence, he remarked, 'Well, poor boy, he is ruined ; he will give up the study of the law, for which he has such a talent, and become the least useful of human beings—a rich man.'

Buying and selling, and piling up a fortune, are not the chief ends of our existence. Life's great end is the fashioning of a noble soul, a soul which will not be ashamed to stand face to

face with God after this fitful fever has run its course.

The passion for the acquisition of wealth for its own sake is, after all, a very ignoble passion, and Mammon, whom Milton called 'the least erected spirit that fell,' is but a mean and sordid deity.

The Desire for Fame

Fame is another idol to which men pay unreasoning homage. We do not question that it has often furnished a spur to efforts which have made for nobleness, and have enriched the commonwealth, but the belief that the men of the greatest celebrity are the happiest men is the inveterate fallacy of shallow minds. If sought for its own sake, nothing can prove more hollow or disappointing than the thirst for fame. Jane Welsh Carlyle said, 'I married for ambition—Carlyle has exceeded all that my wildest hopes ever imagined of him—and I am miserable.' King Hieron of Syracuse, as he donned his robe of state, said to Simonides, 'If thou knewest with what cares and miseries this robe were stuffed, thou wouldst not stoop to take it up.' These are not the only sighs which have been breathed by aspirants for fame.

Even where grand, effective service has been rendered, the heart of the toiler has been sickened

by the blindness and ingratitude of men. Charles V exchanged his kingdom for the cell of an anchorite, and deemed himself the gainer by the change. Philip III on his death-bed was heard to sigh, 'Oh that I had never reigned; that I had rather been the poorest man!' Oliver Cromwell declared in one of his speeches, 'I can say in the presence of God, I would have been glad to have lived under my wood-side, to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than to have undertook such a government as this.'

Furthermore, it is exceedingly difficult to say where genuine fame begins. The minnow in the wayside pool is a thing of some consequence in comparison with the wriggling tadpoles near it, but what is it when committed to the ocean? On our last visit to Switzerland we were immensely impressed by a snow-clad Alp soaring above Visp, which almost seemed to touch the bending blue of heaven. On asking a native its name, he replied, 'It has no name. Only the great peaks have a name.' Such is the varying estimate of greatness. It is largely a matter of comparison and surroundings. The peak, lofty to the degree of amazement to an Englishman, was an eminence of little moment to a Swiss.

The height on which 'Fame's proud temple shines afar' is difficult to scale, and should a man reach

the gates of that temple it will be only to find that

Fame and censure with a tether
By fate are always bound together.

And there is this further quality about the desire for fame, that it breeds a hunger which is never satisfied. The aspirant for fame is like a squirrel in a cage—he climbs and climbs, but never makes an end. The knight would be a baronet, the baronet a viscount, the viscount an earl, and so on, without ceasing or resting. Meanwhile, time is ever on the wing, and in the turbulent and hasting chaos of things the idol of to-day supplants the idol of yesterday, and will be in turn supplanted by his successor to-morrow. Thus those who clutch at the phantom men call fame go down to the grave with their boldest purposes unaccomplished and their most ardent wishes unfulfilled. This surely, unless it is found in the way of service and sacrifice for others, is another of the ‘things we can do without.’ That which is truly beautiful and honourable needs nothing further than its own nature to make it so. The reputation of the nightingale can stand on its song, and the diamond is bright whether it be praised or left to shine unheeded.

Social Ambition

The longing for social distinction is another craze which is the parent of continual unrest. There are

few things more hollow than that babbling *coterie* of mediocrities which is called "Society." Madame Swetchine possessed a noble nature, free from pride and the spirit of contempt; yet she writes from Paris to a friend: 'Kind Heaven, the pitiable thing the conversation of these assemblies is! It was the first of the year; nonsense, silliness, gossip, frivolity, were in all their freshness. It is indeed well to repose through the summer, away from what is called the grand world, a taste for which is the greatest misfortune which can happen to the mind and heart.' The poet Wordsworth writes in a similar mood. 'It is an awful truth,' he observes, 'that there neither is nor can be any genuine enjoyment of poetry among nineteen out of twenty of those persons who live, or wish to live, in the broad light of the world—among those who either are or are striving to make themselves people of consideration in society. This is a truth, and an awful one, because to be incapable of a feeling of poetry, in my sense of the word, is to be without love of human nature and reverence for God.' Crabbe says of the butterflies of society:

Men feel their weakness, and to numbers run,
Themselves to strengthen or themselves to shun.

The bane of what is called society is the lack of sincerity and the love of scandal. It is indeed a

dangerous thing to bring people together to talk who have little or nothing to say. That a woman should leave her children, or a man his repose or his library, for such inane trivialities is a never-ceasing wonder to the thoughtful. As for the greater and more serious things of life, we should be fools indeed to bring them to this market. 'Why should we open our hearts to the world?' asks Chateaubriand. 'It laughs at our weaknesses; it does not believe in our virtues; it does not pity our sorrows.' And, furthermore, how may the gentle and the noble dwindle and run to waste amid such associations and companionships! Wordsworth's striking image is appropriate here:

Join twenty tapers of unequal height,
And light them joined, and you will see the less
How't will burn down the taller, and they all
Shall prey upon the tallest.

It is the hollow and unreal thing which is called 'Society' to which the Apostle refers in the exhortation, 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.'

'Society,' so-called, is a sphere in which envy gnaws like a canker, and fair reputations are sullied

by the foul breath of slander. It is a sphere in which mutual esteem and love in marriage are regarded as of little consequence, and innocence and beauty are sold to the highest bidder. It is a sphere in which lust dwells in the hearts of men 'like a toad in the heart of a stone.' It is a sphere in which unworthy women spend at the card-table the time which should be devoted to their children and the money which their husbands toil so hard to win. It is a sphere where every avenue to heaven is closed, because religion is either regarded as a nightmare or branded as hypocrisy and cant. It is a sphere in which immortal creatures, called to glory and virtue, choke with sweet baits of the flesh the divine properties of their being, and fling the precious jewel of their souls into the mire, to be trodden underfoot by swine. It is a sphere from which you cannot gain one fleeting smile you have not paid for, and which, with all its promises and caresses, and all the time and effort you waste upon it, cannot love you, for it is heartless.

Here is another of the 'things I can do without.' With my children round my chair; and my ministrant wife at her needle; and my silver-haired mother, 'in whose face I have seen the eternal,' smiling on us all; and with Homer, and Shakespeare, and Milton, and Dante, with a host of other immortals, waiting to commune with me in the next

room, I have all the society my heart and soul desire.

The catalogue of things which men desire might be indefinitely increased, but we will content ourselves with those to which we have referred—the lust for wealth, the thirst for fame, and the longing for that social intercourse among the titled and the privileged which is termed ‘Society.’

The verdict we will give according to the evidence is this—that nothing which is outside a man can fitly be accounted wealth, that fame is but a bubble which the touch of death will burst, and that the ‘solemn troops and sweet societies’ of the sainted dead invite to finer fellowships than earth can offer. The fact is that, in the beautiful ordination of God, the greatest happiness of all is one which a cottar may possess, and this is also true of the greatest nobleness. Peace of mind, purity of heart, strength to live honourably, victory over all things mean and base; patience, kindness, humility, and abounding hope, together with a safe anchorage within the veil,—these are gifts which are not the special privilege of the rich or which wait merely at the doors of mansions and palaces. The things which, if self-respecting and alive to our higher destiny, we cannot do without, are ‘in widest commonalty spread.’ There is no proportion between the objects which the unthinking world desires and essential wealth and nobleness.

In lowly rooms and thatched dwellings men may walk with poets, saints, and prophets. In dim, unlovely streets they may realize the joy of the Divine Presence, pulsate to the breath of Infinite Love, and feel the beating of the Great Heart which keeps creation warm. Paul and John, Milton and Marvell, Wesley and Chalmers, did not dwell in palaces, and the fairest life that was ever lived on earth was that of a poor man. 'What a narrow place this is!' said one to a little girl playing in a London alley. 'But look how high it is!' she answered, glancing at the blue sky above. Thank God, there is a heaven for every man who will only aspire!

Sweetly does T. B. Aldrich sing :

As clear as amber, fine as musk,
Is the life of those who, pilgrim-wise,
Move hand in hand, from dawn to dusk,
Each morning nearer Paradise.

Oh, not for them shall angels pray!
They stand in everlasting light,
They live in Allah's smile by day,
And nestle in His heart at night.

VIII. THE VALUE OF IDEALS

Not the good things we accomplish,
But the better things we plan ;
Not achievement, but ideal,
Is the measure of the man.

SAMUEL V. COLE.

You may dislike the word ideal, or reject it, but the thing you cannot get rid of if you would live any life above that of the brutes.—PRINCIPAL SHAIRP.

MANIFESTLY, and without controversy, man is the crown, the epitome, and the lord of the world he treads. It is not fitting, therefore, that he should hold his manhood cheap. Whatever may be the conclusions of science with regard to his origin, we have to deal with him, not as he *was*, but as he *is*. Personally, we are of opinion that the spirit of man is not brute-descended. However this may be, it is certain that there is a divine quality in man, which urges him to continual effort after purer living and finer being. When true to his higher nature, he is haunted by a certain noble restlessness, a divine discontent, which indicates that it is the purpose of God that he should be a fellow worker with Him in the formation of his character and the achievement of

his destiny. The mere animal was finished from the first, and does not grow. The Creator took everything which concerned the brute on Himself. He left the brute nothing to do with regard to its own development. Man, however, is not fully made, but entrusted, in considerable measure, with the power to make himself. 'A god, though in the germ,' as Browning describes him, he possesses a power of self-determination and choice through which he may transcend his brutal heritage and move up into divine conditions. Man progresses because he is not merely a better beast, but a blending of dust and Deity—'a god, though in the germ.'

A most important factor in this process of self-moulding and self-uplifting consists in the pursuit of those ideals of beauty and perfection which are among the chief gifts of God to the human spirit.

These ideals are among the most precious possessions of humanity. They are as angels walking with us amid the dust and heat of the way. In virtue of their presence, whatever of weakness, sorrow, or misfortune may afflict a man, he has still within him the image and the hope of something nobler, better, and happier. To this image, varying as it does with the character and personality of each individual, society is largely indebted for its continued progress.

The Ideal is that which the mind contemplates

as that which ought to be, as contrasted with that which is. It is that higher vision of beauty and of virtue which the awakened soul, born to seek God, and to sigh for Paradise, sets before it as the goal of its desire, the

One great aim, like a guiding star above—
Which tasks strength, wisdom, stateliness to lift
Our manhood to the height that takes the prize.

And the higher the ideal, if the soul swerves not from its purpose, but lays hold on divine succours, the loftier the attainment—on the principle that ‘he who aims at the sun shoots higher than he who aims at a tree.’ No man builds better than he plans; no artist surpasses on the canvas or in the marble the ideal present to his soul; no man rises higher than he desires to rise. Therefore, unattainable ideals are the making of a man. There is a deep meaning in the couplet:

What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me.

Aspiration and Attainment

Our ideal of moral and spiritual beauty may, in this fettering, tempted, and imperfect life, be impossible of attainment. The wings of the soul may flutter at it helplessly, though with desire. Yet it must not be lowered on that account, but kept steadfastly before us. Our attitude must be

that of the great Apostle where he says: 'Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect; but I press on.'

To object to high ideals because they transcend our present powers of attainment is an error. It is also a misconception of the purpose of the ideal. It is not so much the law by which we hope to live as the type and standard by which we measure our deviations from the perfect. We rightly deplore the contrast between our life as it is and as it ought to be; but we must not banish our guardian angel because her beauty humbles us, neither must we desire that she should be less lovely than she is because we have not acquired her loveliness. The ideal is the pole-star by which we steer, and it must not change, though wind and wave should drive us from our course. We must not meanly lower our ideal or thrust it from us because we have not reached it. It was base conduct on the part of the men of Athens to banish the noble and incorruptible Aristides because they were tired of hearing him called 'The Just.' The best may elude us, and even shame us, but it leads us on.

We must ever keep in mind
How far high failure overleaps the bound
Of low success.

Furthermore, it would be, in a certain sense, a misfortune to have realized our ideal, because thence-

forth we should cease to aspire and grow. A story illustrating this is told of Thorwaldsen, the great Danish sculptor. On showing a friend a lovely creation from his hand, his friend said, 'You have reached perfection there. You cannot surpass that.' 'Nay,' replied the sculptor, 'I can achieve something better still.' Ten years rolled away, and the friend was invited to view another work from the hand of the master. It was a statue of great beauty, and the friend said, 'Surely you cannot hope to produce anything better than that?' 'No,' said the sculptor; 'I feel that I cannot achieve anything better. I have reached my ideal, and now my genius will cease to grow.'

There is encouragement here for those who have failed to attain the ideal they have set before them. They have still room to grow. This is the one distinction between the finite and the infinite excellence. The finite excellence can grow, while the infinite excellence must for ever stand still. The Eternal Infinite is ever at the goal, but, for the finite mind,

All experience is an arch where thro'
Gleams that untravelled world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when we move.

Ideal Aims

The life of a man is moulded, and his character determined, by two things—first, the aims which he

sets before him, and second, the strength of will with which he pursues those aims. Gifted with freedom and the power of self-determination, man can create his own ideals and select his own aims. He can devote himself to some final purposes of life, and, by voluntary effort, make all things contribute to that purpose. Every sane man should be able to give an account to himself of what he is living for and what goal he has set himself to reach. His whole life should be in strict subordination to reason, and he should be ready to offer an intelligent justification of the supreme aim of his life and his conduct in pursuit of that aim. It is not too much to say that he who has not before his mind a high ideal of what he ought to be, and how he ought to live, will never attain any worthy degree of moral excellence. He will rest content with present acquisitions, and present success, and present strength, and think himself already at the summit when he has but begun the steep ascent. As in the old Platonic philosophy, the ideas of all actual and possible existence lay from eternity in the Divine Mind, according to which ideas as types the universe of actual things was formed, so may it with truth be said that in our minds lie the types of our own being and destiny, and that we are ever forming and fashioning our actual selves according to the ideas we have ourselves formed of what we might be if we would, and what we would

be if we could. No man can feel his life to be poor, frivolous, and unsatisfactory, if he is consecrating it to high aims. A great purpose earnestly pursued, a purpose to the achievement of which every energy is definitely bent, and which, therefore, involves much renunciation and discipline of self, is of itself a great uplifting force. And when that purpose is a moral purpose, directed by conscience, by the sense of duty, and by the feeling of responsibility to man and God, its results become at once sublime and unspeakably uplifting. The littleness of life disappears, its cares become as motes in the sunbeam, its trivial allurements lose their fascination, we are delivered from 'the vain desires which are the constant hectic of the fool,' and reach those higher tablelands 'where God Himself is moon and sun.'

Yet further, it is helpful to remember that, amid so much in this earthly life which baffles adequate attainment, a noble ideal, faithfully cherished, may be counted to us for righteousness. While men pass judgement only on that which is finished and complete—

Heaven within the reed
Lists for the flute-note, in the folded seed
It sees the bud, and in the Will the Deed.

Ideal Examples

Ideal aims receive a powerful stimulus from ideal examples. George MacDonald says: 'To know a

man who can be trusted will do more for one's moral nature than all the books of divinity that were ever written.' Goodness, and beauty, and truth are wonderful forces when they are made flesh and dwell among us. To study lives which have embodied the fair qualities which the soul approves is of inestimable value in moral culture. To dwell in the presence of those who lift clearly before us the nobler conduct of life; who are merciful, gentle, and forgiving; who permit no shadow of wilful sin to intervene between their souls and God; who stand off from all mean and unscrupulous ambitions; who possess that chastity of honour which feels a stain like a wound; whose law is obedience, whose aim is service, and whose strength is fellowship with the Eternal; who do right for the love of right and not for the happiness which it gives or promises; who do kindly deeds for the love of their kind and not for the praise or the homage they command—

Bright affluent spirits, breathing but to bless,
Whose presence cheers men's eyes and warms their hearts,
Whose lavish goodness this old world renews,
Like the free sunshine on the living air,—

to study lives like these, either through personal converse or from the biographic page, is a liberal education in all that makes for ideal excellence. It is not possible to be as ignoble as we otherwise might

have been when such examples have passed before us. They quicken the potentialities of goodness which lie dormant in our souls. They are the torch-bearers of the world who scatter its darkness—the exemplars who teach us what we might be if we were only ‘loyal to the royal’ in ourselves. In hours of depression, when we blend despair of ourselves with complaint of the world, their passing is as the visit of an angel sent to strengthen us. They attest our human kinship with heaven, and with the powers that cannot die. Every good and faithful life with which we become acquainted is a positive addition to our moral power, a God-sent instrument for our uplifting. We become assimilated to that which we admire, and, admiring, emulate. Plato says: ‘From the souls of those who have gazed on celestial truth and beauty, the remembrance can never be effaced. Like some divine inspiration, the glory they have beheld possesses and haunts them.’

Ideal Hopes

There is yet another elevating force in the world of ideals, and it finds its well-spring in ideal hopes. Aspiration and hope are twin sisters. Ideal living opens up sublime vistas of expectation and of promise. Created to love goodness and to reach out after perfection, the aspiring soul refuses to be bounded

by the futile and disappointing present. It looks for a larger and fuller life, where its aspirations will be realized and its longings stilled. It is conscious of rudiments of qualities and powers which may reasonably be expected to survive the change which we call death, and to find their full development in a life beyond the grave. Robert Browning, the poet and the seer, argues that the incompleteness of man—his imperfections taken in view of his ideals, his possibilities, and his aspirations—makes for the reasonableness of our hope of a future state of existence and for the immortality of the soul. Everything else in Nature is perfect and complete. Man is the summit and crown of Nature; yet he is imperfect. The star-fish outstrips man in this particular, in that it is complete, while man is incomplete. Unless, then, the structure of the human constitution in its highest ranges is alike defective and abortive, 'there needs another life to come'; otherwise, as Paracelsus says, 'tis a poor cheat and stupid bungle.' Man is

The heir of hopes too fair to turn out false.

Not only is the fitting destiny of man involved in this argument, but also the wisdom and faithfulness of his Creator. There are no dissonances in the divine music. Our finest and purest instincts raise no false expectations. 'The Creator,' as Emerson

says, 'keeps His word with us.' The perfection after which we thirst, the fore-gleams of heaven which sting us with hunger for its unshadowed and unsullied light, are prophecies of that which is yet to be.

For this life is but being's first faint ray,
And heaven on heaven makes up God's perfect day.

The lofty spirit of Plato discerned this vital and ennobling truth. Hence, he says in his *Republic*: 'Never at any time is he neglected by the gods who inclines earnestly to endeavour to become just, and practises virtue so far as it is possible for man to resemble God.' Again, in the *Symposium*, the great Greek thinker, following the flight of the aspiring soul in its quest of the beautiful, beholds it at last led up into the presence of the absolute beauty, or, in Christian language, into the Presence of God—the source and essence of all beauty and excellence. In harmony with this is the teaching of the great Apostle where he says that 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.'

Hopes such as these, charged with 'all the wonder that shall be,' and measured only by the divine magnificence, transfigure and ennoble life. They—

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence.

Hopes such as these invigorate the will, purify the affections, check the fires of passion, quicken into life the languor of despair, charge the veins of age with the warm pulses of youth, and draw the spirit from the earthly and sensual life into harmony with the will and kingdom of God. Filled and thrilled by their entrancing spell, we borrow the wealth of eternity for the enrichment of the poverty of time.

Men should cherish their ideals with a miser's care—ideal aims, ideal examples, ideal hopes. They are intensely practical, even if they are in this life unattainable. They are angels who lead us on to finer issues of being and becoming. They are stars by which we steer amid the mist and murk of the restless sea of time, keeping our prow ever set toward the heavenly haven. They are the Pisgah heights from which we view the land of our desire—a land of beauty and of wealth; a land where peace flows as a river and righteousness as the waves of the sea; a land where prophets, heroes, martyrs, and just men made perfect, walk high in bliss upon the hills of God; the home of our sainted and transfigured dead; the sphere of the beatific vision.

We may not tread as yet that kingdom of glory which is the theatre of the divine recompense, but to see it from afar is in itself an attraction and an

inspiration which keeps our feet from stumbling and our souls from slime. Meanwhile, unsullied, unshaken, and eternal, it awaits our coming, when the weary weed of our mortal body has been laid aside, and 'death is swallowed up in victory.' Then we shall learn that, though we have failed and faltered, the divine compassions falter not nor fail, but fulfil their promise 'exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.' O spirits, faint and yet pursuing, abound in hope! To quote from A. A. Procter :

Have we not all, amid earth's petty strife,
Some pure ideal of a noble life,
That once seemed possible? Did we not hear
The flutter of its wings, and feel it near,
And just within our reach? It was!—and yet
We lost it in this daily jar and fret . . .
But still our place is kept, and it will wait
Ready for us to fill it, soon or late;
No star is ever lost we once have seen—
We always may be what we might have been.

IX. OUR ENGLAND

This royal throne of Kings, this sceptred isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise;
This fortress built by Nature for herself,
Against infection, and the hand of war;
This happy breed of men, this little world;
This precious stone set in a silver sea.

SHAKESPEARE.

Lords and Commons of England, consider what nation it is whereof ye are and whereof ye are the governors; a nation not slow and dull, but of quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit, acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to.—MILTON'S *Areopagitica*.

THUS, in her praise, have spoken the two greatest voices of England, and the truths they utter may well awaken an honest pride in the hearts of all her sons. The sentiment of Patriotism is one of the most beautiful of all the feelings which dignify our common nature. It obtains in some degree in every land, for every land is Motherland and Fatherland to such as first draw breath in it, and these dear relations must ever render it a sacred spot.

But love of country is naturally strongest where

freedom, justice, and honour most prevail. And when to these are added the fascination of a great history carved out by heroes, the ennobling sanctities of religion, and the element of rare natural beauty, we are not surprised that Patriotism becomes, not merely a sentiment, but a passion, and that men are ready to suffer, and, if need be, to die, for home and native land. Who can adequately fathom the pathos and the privilege of English birth, with all of honour, and pride, and love that it includes? It is a well-spring of grateful tears; it is a demand for consecration to God.

Before we proceed further, let it be understood that in this essay we speak of England in her nobler aspects and her nobler moods. We deal with Shakespeare's 'little body with a mighty heart'—with the nation which has stamped its impress on the world and led humanity up to higher levels of justice, liberty, and good-will.

It was the Frenchman, Mirabeau, who cried, with eloquent irony: 'England is lost! Great God! what terrible news! In what latitude is she lost? What earthquake, what convulsion of Nature has swallowed up that famous isle, that inexhaustible home of splendid models, that classic land of the friends of liberty?' 'Mother of nations and heroes,' said that great American, Emerson, 'this aged England, with the possessions, honours, and trophies, and also

with the infirmities of a thousand years gathering round her, has still a secret vigour and a pulse like a cannon.'

At the time of the Coronation of King Edward, the *Pester Lloyd*, one of the foremost of the Austrian journals, said: 'England remains great, mighty, commanding, and respected, despite her military deficiencies. . . . It is the soul which builds up the body; it is the marvellous spirit of the people which makes up for the want of material strength.'

So much for foreign testimony; while our own William Watson has struck the splendid note:

O England! shouldst thou one day fall,
Shattered in ruins by some Titan foe,
Justice were henceforth weaker throughout all
The world, and Truth less passionately free,
And God the poorer for thy overthrow.

England's Rich Inheritance

We readily admit that England has not made herself all that she is among civilized nations. She entered at the outset on an inheritance of advantage which may well inspire thankfulness to the Giver of all good.

First and foremost among her advantages is that of *race*. An eminent thinker has said: 'It is in the deep traits of race that the fortunes of nations are written.' In this important particular, England has

been greatly favoured. The English people are a people of mixed blood. They represent a fusion of some of the finest races of the earth. Lordly Roman, fiery and imaginative Celt, patient and indomitable Saxon, storm-braving Viking, chivalrous Norman—all have contributed to make them what they are in spirit and in genius. They are a hardy people, a people of strong physique and splendid energy, a people endowed with special endurance either for labour or for war. Plant them where you will, and they make themselves respected; developed under a bracing and changeful climate, they can pant in the tropics or shiver at the poles, and are everywhere the employers and the kings of men.

Another inherited advantage of England is that of her *geographical position*. Herschel, the astronomer, declared England to be the centre of the terrene globe, and he was right in that deduction. Take a globe, and bring England to the zenith, and you will find that of all spots it is the nearest, the most accessible, and the most central of all the lands of the earth. Emerson said that England resembled a ship in shape. 'Were it one,' said another thinker, 'the ablest admiral could not have brought it up to a more effective position. Anchored on the side of Europe, near enough to see her harvests wave, but remote enough to defy her armies.' Her insular position has saved her from the devastations, wars,

and revolutions of Europe. She has learnt their lessons, without sharing in their bitterness.

Yet, further, England has been greatly favoured by her *natural resources*. Possessed of a fertile soil, capable, under careful cultivation, of producing to perfection every necessary kind of food and fruit, as well as of rearing sheep and cattle; abounding in water, stone, timber, salt, and potter's clay; within touch of the harvest of the sea; in close proximity to vast deposits of coal and iron, the source of incalculable wealth; gifted with seaports and navigable rivers which render her capable of bearing her commercial treasures into all the harbours of the world,—she is indeed a favoured land.

The Beauty of England

No intelligent observer can deny to England the praise of beauty. And her beauty appears not merely in select places, as in the Lake Country, or on the coast of Devon, or amid the dales of Yorkshire, but, except in the immediate vicinity of our great manufacturing towns, it is a universal presence. Well might William Blake, artist and poet, sing of

England's green and pleasant land.

In travelling from Liverpool to London by rail we have frequently been impressed by the enthusiasm of American visitors on their first vision of English

fields. With one accord they have echoed the sentiments of Emerson, where he says, 'England is a garden. The fields have been combed and rolled until they appear to have been finished with a pencil instead of a plough.'

The tender beauty of an English landscape, with its cattle browsing in the dell, its daisies peeping at the sun, its buttercups flashing back the light, its cowslips drooping their hooded heads like monks in prayer, its bluebells covering the woodland floor like a mist of shattered rainbows, the gentle curvature of its green hills, its sleeping silver of placid lakes, or song of shining rivers hasting to the seas—all this is, to those who mark the changeful pageant, so divinely planned, a never-ceasing joy.

Unmatched in the whole world is the comfort and repose of

An English home—grey twilight poured
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

The nested village, with its red tiles, suggestive of ingle-nook and ruddy firelight; the barns, lichen-stained with Nature's lavish gold, above which the old church spire points its silent finger to the sky; the trees of the woodland, grouped as for a picture, amid whose listening silence the blackbird flutes, doves mourn, and the cuckoo calls as with a voice mellowed

by immemorial time ; the ploughman's patient team grasping the firm earth with their shaggy feet, while the rich brown soil falls like a cut wave before the shining steel ; the quivering skylark springing from its clover covert to bathe its speckled breast in light and pour down melody like silver rain ; the noisy rooks in their homeward flight to the wood beside the gabled manor, dappling the crimson west with flakes of darkness ; what E. B. Browning calls

The ground's most gentle dimplement,
As if God's finger touched but did not press
In making England.

Whoso will observe these things shall feast on a quiet loveliness which moves the heart to gladness and the lips to praise.

The Spirit of her People

The salient characteristics of the English people are common sense, justice, piety, courage, industry, thoroughness, magnanimity. *Common sense* appears in their sound judgement of things, in their readiness to admit two sides to a question, and in that respect for law and order which restrains them from excess and revolution. They stand firm on a basis of fact, and are slow to accept theory. They welcome without reservation the dogma that life is worth living, and, being in it, they set themselves sturdily and

sensibly to make the best of it. They are a free people, and can be trusted with freedom.

The love of *justice* is another of their salient qualities. Nothing stings them like injustice, and with nothing do they wage such honest and unsleeping war. And the justice they demand for themselves they are ready to yield to others. They earn the respect, if they fail to win the affection, of the nations and peoples they rule, by upright government and straightforward dealing. Mr. F. M. Hueffer says: 'The ethical basis of conduct in Britain is "Do as you would be done by."'

Piety is another beautiful, and we had almost said, natural quality of the English people. If faithful to their great traditions, they are friends of the Sabbath and the Sanctuary, and lovers of their grand old Saxon Bible. That grace of the Divine Spirit which is the natural endowment of the race seems to have been granted to them in a special measure. 'For the English nation,' says Swedenborg, 'the best of them are in the centre of all Christians, because they have interior intellectual light.' England is a land of martyrs and confessors, a land of the grandest religious treatises and hymns, a land of the sublimest sacred architecture. She owes more to her religion than to any other factor in her civilization. It has become the fashion to decry Puritanism, but, nevertheless, it built the British Empire, and is the

only force that is capable of permanently maintaining it. The divine secret of England's order and prosperity is that fear of God and that faith in immortality which produced Alfred and St. Anselm ; Milton and Cromwell ; Latimer and Wesley ; General Gordon and William Booth.

The *courage* of the English people none can question who study her records on land and sea. Her sons find it hard to run away ; they fight sturdily, and die with grandeur. It is said that no class of soldiers in the world are so cool as the British when hemmed in by an enemy. Nelson said of his sailors : ' They really mind shot no more than peas.' English liberty has been threatened in vain, from the defeat of the Spanish Armada—which was not the work of a mercenary levy, but of a nation in arms—to the triumph of Waterloo, which not only saved her from invasion, but delivered Europe from the heel of a military tyrant.

For *industry* and *thoroughness* again, what nation can compete with England ? Her working people toil far more hours in the day than any other people in Europe. As husbandmen, weavers, smiths, masons, shipbuilders, merchants, where are they surpassed ? Only a hardy and industrious people could have made so small a territory the richest in the world. Her climate demands toil, and her people willingly accept it as their destiny. The looms of Lancashire

and Yorkshire, the furnaces and anvils of Birmingham and Sheffield, the workshops of Hanley and Stoke—what hives of strenuous industry they represent! Then, with regard to thoroughness, what of the quality and endurance of her locomotives, her agricultural implements, her ships, her Sheffield blades? What an army is that of her millions of workers, ‘the strongest, the cunningest, and the willingest,’ as Carlyle has said, ‘our earth ever had.’ The only pity of it all is that the worker possesses and enjoys so little of the fruit of his toil.

Magnanimity is another of the fine qualities of the English people. England has never bitterly resented the American rebellion and separation provoked by the folly and stupidity of some of her rulers; and by what other nation would General Botha have received such a welcome? or militant and defiant Africa had her practical independence so speedily restored? England has never in these later centuries been successfully invaded, yet Madox Hueffer tells with a kind of amazed wonder how she has been continually invaded by the exiled and the persecuted of all lands. He says: ‘If, in the eyes of Englishmen, England be a home, in the eyes of the whole world England is almost more—a goodly inn, a harbourage for the needy and the outcast. . . . Danes, Jews, Flemings, French Huguenots, all the adventurous of Europe, have flung themselves on her

shores.' Here they have found refuge and sanctuary.
'A praise,' writes Algernon Swinburne—

A praise so sweet in our ears,
That thou in the tempest of things,
As a rock for a refuge should stand,
In the blood-red river of tears
Poured forth for the triumph of Kings ;
A safeguard, a sheltering land,
In the thunder and torrent of years.

Her History of Progress

Despite those retrogressions, which have been as the withdrawal of waves in a rising tide, the history of England has been one of progression. 'Nothing,' says Lord Macaulay, 'is so interesting and delightful as to contemplate the steps by which the England of the Domesday Book, the England of the curfew and the forest laws, the England of Crusaders, monks, schoolmen, astrologers, serfs, outlaws, became the England that we know and love, the classic ground of liberty and philosophy, the school of all knowledge, the mart of all trade.' Without hasting, yet without resting, England has moved upward and onward in social bettering and in individual liberty. There is no country in the world which enjoys so much of genuine freedom. 'Mine is a great country,' said a Frenchman to the writer during a conversation on a Channel steamer ; 'but I breathe more freely in England than in France. I feel that my individual

liberty is more guarded and secure, and that I shall receive justice.'

Only within living memory, what beneficent changes have taken place ! Temperance has made wonderful progress among the masses. We visited the ' White City ' one day, when half a million people had passed through the turnstiles, and there was not one drunken man in all the crowd—a remarkable change in the last fifty years. Transportation and imprisonment for debt have been abolished. No one can be executed for a less flagrant crime than murder. The system of prison discipline is laid on wiser and more merciful lines. Education is provided free of charge for the masses of the people. Whereas, fifty years ago, about eighty thousand letters were posted yearly, now there are two hundred millions posted. Hospitals for every form of disease abound, and are nobly endowed. Pain is mitigated by merciful anaesthetics. Surgical operations once deemed impossible are safely performed. Children are protected from violence and wrong. Pensions have been established for the aged poor. England grows gladder. She moves onward toward the fixed and inviolable centre of right and nobleness. The eternal Justice greets her with a smile.

We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held. In everything we are sprung
Of earth's best blood, have titles manifold.

Her Wealth of Capable Men

Of England it may be safely said that no country has ever been so rich in able men. England, indeed, has produced three or four of the greatest men that ever existed, men who have won and retained for her the intellectual sceptre of Europe. In literature, in science, in invention, in politics, in evangelism, and in war, she has outdistanced all her rivals. Shakespeare and Milton, Newton and Darwin, Watt and Stephenson, Drake and Raleigh, Nelson and Wellington, Bunyan and Hooker, Sydney and Cromwell, Wesley, Bacon, Ruskin, Herbert Spencer, Reynolds, Constable, Turner. What a galaxy of stars is here, and how many other orbs of almost equal magnitude have moved in the same heavens! The difficulty of many nations is to find men capable of initiating and directing great movements; but the hour in England has always found the man equal to its necessities and responsive to its call. Dr. Sieper, of Munich, said in genuine admiration to a representative of the English press: 'Some of your best men are giving their best time and energy to the public service without financial reward of any kind whatever.' We cannot but recall in this connexion the splendid powers consecrated to his country's weal of such a man as William Ewart Gladstone. How magnificent his service, inspired by stainless

integrity and unswerving righteousness! how lofty his conception of his great calling! and how splendid the patriotism which throbs in his sublime utterance! —‘Words fail me. I cannot tell you what I think of the nobleness of the inheritance that has descended upon us, of the sacredness of the duty of maintaining it. It is a part of my being, of my flesh and blood, of my heart and soul—for those things I have laboured from my youth, through my manhood, until my hairs are grey.’

Even so doth Heaven protect the land we love so well.

Land of our birth, our faith, our pride,
For whose dear sake our fathers died:
O Motherland, we pledge to thee,
Head, heart, and hand through the years to be.

X. THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Throned on the lip and verge of the great sea,
Ordained for lordship by the will divine ;
Grandly hast thou fulfilled thy destiny,
By valour and by fortitude sublime.
Freedom has hailed thee from her breezy heights,
Pity has blessed thee in her onward way ;
Victory has crowned thee in a hundred fights,
Sorrow and gloom have perished 'neath thy sway—
Britain, all hail ! still may thy drum-beat's roll
Reverberate and thrill from pole to pole.

R. P. D.

For seven hundred years we have existed as a nation, constantly advancing in liberty, wealth, and refinement ; holding out the lights of philosophy and true religion to all the world ; presenting mankind with the greatest of human institutions.—RICHARD COBDEN.

B RITAIN is a greater word than England. We should be blind, indeed, to the glory which is ours if we forget to recognize the fact that to Scotland, to Ireland, and to Wales also, belong our great achievements alike in peace and war—in the preservation of our liberties and the extension of our Empire. What a happy incident is that which has blended these four ideal peoples in one national State ! The English, strong, tender, industrious, large-hearted, magnanimous, and gifted, as Emerson says, with 'a

golden mean of temperament which constitutes them the best stock in the world.' The Scotch, hardy, thrifty, God-fearing, cautious, brave, capable, trustworthy, masters of finance, and the very foremost of pioneers and colonists. The Irish, winsome, confiding, affectionate, generous, responsive to every touch and breath of kindness, lovers and poets among the nations. The Welsh, impulsive, valorous, rich in feeling, grandly at home in the kingdom of music, and not less at home in the yet higher kingdom of religion.

On many a well-fought field these four gifted peoples have stood in battle-line, and struck terror into the heart of the foe, and by their united and devoted hands the British flag has been raised under every sky. English rose-gardens and cathedral closes; Scottish cities, crofts, schools, and universities; Irish cabins, moors, and lake-lands; Welsh coal-mines, choirs, and chapels, have nurtured the fertile race who have been the makers of nations, the frontiersmen and colonists of the world.

Our Vast Dependencies

The total population of the territories won by these hardy and adventurous spirits may be to-day set down at four hundred millions of souls. The area of this Empire, thus so far outstripping even in

numbers any other sovereignty, is about twelve million square miles, which may be roundly called a hundred times greater than the parent islands from which have issued this brood of 'principalities and powers.'

Standing on the lip and verge of the great sea, Britain has sailed east, west, north, and south, and planted nations. The white wake of an Atlantic steamer is the true avenue to her palace front; Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Africa, are fast filling with her sons; the United States, now her compeer, is, after all, her offshoot; Ceylon and the Mauritius she occupies for trade; the dusky millions of India obey the whisper of her throne, and the land is covered by a network of laws woven in her Anglo-Saxon loom; fabled, weird, and magnificent Egypt, the land of the Pyramids and of the Sphinx, is under her protection; she has conquered the Sudanese desert, and made it amenable to her sway.

Year by year the surplus of our home-brood overflows into these vast outlying dependencies, where, from end to end of the earth's daily revolution, the same laws, the same institutions, and the same ordered liberties exist. Rome carved out her empire by the sword, and held by the sword that which she had won by it. To Britain has been left the glory of reconciling the two elements which Rome found incompatible—Empire and Liberty.

The Miracle of British Rule

Let us consider for a brief space the marvel, or what we may justly term the miracle, of the British Empire. Its genius, composition, and character present matter for amazement to all studious minds. Never before were so many diverse elements united and controlled under the shelter of one common government. If a people is descended from the same ancestors, or embraces the same religion, or speaks the same language, we can understand the possibility of its union. But in this case we are presented with the marvellous spectacle of hundreds of millions of alien peoples living under the same flag, and united in allegiance to the same Sovereign. Nothing like it has been previously presented to the world either in ancient or modern history. No Caesar or Charlemagne ever presided over a dominion so peculiar, a dominion so independent of all natural ties of kindred, religion, literature, polity, or language. It holds sway on the shores of every ocean and under every climate from the Equatorial to the Arctic. It is found among the bleak mountains of the Indian frontier; amid the blaze and beauty of Ceylon; among the barren sands of the Sudan; in the green Nile valley; in the swamps and forests of West Africa; in the rolling corn-lands of Canada; in the Australian bush; under the shadow of the Pyramids;

in the vast provinces of Hindustan, Turkestan, and Afghanistan; on the rugged ridges of the Hindu Kush. It dominates in India the great ports of Calcutta, Bombay, Rangoon, and Madras; and, in China, the harbours of Canton, Tientsin, Hankow, Shanghai, and Hong Kong. Its rule comprehends meek Hindus and warlike Sikhs; Hillsmen dwelling in the folds of the Himalayas; Burmese, Mongol in race and Buddhist in religion; Beels and Khonds, and other non-Aryan peoples; Mohammedans in Cairo and under every tropic sky; Arabs, Moors, Caucasians, and Negroes; Boers, Kaffirs, and Matabeles.

Its administration has demanded every species of talent exercised by man. Warriors, sailors, explorers, missionaries, merchants, engineers, physicians, bankers, miners, scholars, consuls, ambassadors, statesmen, have served its manifold interests.

Every form of government enters into its scheme of dominion. Self-governing colonies, Crown colonies, dependencies, protectorates, chartered companies, conquered and controlled empires—all are included in its pale.

It has been built up by a little kingdom with an insignificant army, in the vision, and exposed to the jealousy of four great military powers, which, when on a war footing, could bring into the field six or seven millions of men in the prime and flower of lusty life.

All these things considered, how can we regard the British Empire with any other feeling than that of awe? It confronts us in the aspect of a miracle of time. We are compelled to attribute its creation and development less to the energy and fortune of our race than to the providence and direction of Almighty God.

‘For whom,’ asks Milton, in one of his splendid lines—

For whom hold we the gorgeous East in fee?

And without hesitation we reply:

For whom, Eternal Father, but for Thee?

The Beneficence of British Rule

Furthermore, the domination of Britain is a boon to all her subject-lands, for we have annexed nothing which we have not blessed. Speaking of our vast expansion, the *Pester Lloyd*, one of the first journals in Vienna, says: ‘The spirit of liberty and the sentiment of a common humanity has been taken into these great dependencies. These colonies have never been regarded as conquered provinces or fields for exploitation, but as valuable branches of the British Power, as pearls in the Crown of England.’ A German editor says: ‘England is still a distinguished pioneer of civilization, and the best wishes of her people always accompany these enter-

prises, which are undertaken, not only to extend her power and dominion, but also to promote the interests of humanity. The British sword is always followed by the British plough and ship, and it is this which establishes the success of her forward policy, since it constantly affords to it fresh justification.'

Testimonies such as these may well rid us of 'the craven fear of being great,' and silence the carping critics who identify the imperial ideal with Jingoism, and who attribute to the mere lust of conquest the effort to open markets for the toiling millions of our people. Wherever Britain extends her authority, justice and freedom and humanity follow, and there is no dearer hope for mankind than that many a generation to come may see this marvellous agency of civilization safely spreading, and still hear 'the King's morning-drum beat round the world.'

A glance at some of the nations and peoples which have been benefited by our presence and our rule will prove at once instructive and inspiring. We need not linger on our achievements in Canada and in Australasia. These self-governing colonies present in their peace, their prosperity, their progress, and their power, their own vindication of our policy and work.

We will endeavour to think for a brief period in continents.

Africa

Before the British entered Africa, it was literally the 'Dark Continent.' The Portuguese had established their trading-stations on its west and eastern shores, but all that lay behind was an unknown world. Mainly inhabited by barbarous peoples of negro stock, who produced little which Europeans could trade in, the iniquitous slave traffic was its most important industry.

It was not until the nineteenth century that a succession of brave explorers, mainly British, gradually discovered and mapped the features of the interior. Of these, Mungo Park may be regarded as the pioneer, followed by heroes such as Livingstone, Cameron, and Stanley. It was then discovered that vast areas of the interior of the country were not desert wastes, but fertile tablelands watered by great rivers. It was thus realized that in Africa were new fields for colonial enterprise, and new markets for European manufactures. Then began the scramble of the nations for the partition of the country, with the result that Great Britain came into possession of the most valuable regions on that continent.

It would need a larger space than we have at command to show how, under the guidance of men like Cecil Rhodes, we have enriched Africa by the development of her resources, and how Africa, in

her turn, has enriched the world. Blood, it is true, has been spilt for the maintenance of our supremacy there ; but that grievous wound is now healed, and a vast continent, marvellous for mineral wealth and ripe for the labour of the husbandman, has been opened up for human enterprise.

As the result of our presence in the country, the cruel slave trade has been abolished ; helpless and unarmed natives have been protected from cruelty and injustice ; schools have been established ; the means of communication have been improved ; a policy of land settlement has been inaugurated which secures for the toiler a stake in the soil ; scientific departments have been equipped for agriculture, forestry, and irrigation ; a wide scheme of local self-government has been initiated,—indeed, the whole country has been practically transformed. All this has been achieved by British administration, backed up by British capital and enterprise.

The prescience of the wisest of men cannot divine the final influence of the railway now being constructed from the Cape to Cairo on the destiny of the world, and the civilization and development of hitherto savage and neglected peoples.

India

Turning from Africa to the vast Continent of India, with its dusky hive of two hundred and fifty millions,

we have still less reason to be ashamed of our record. We have not won and held India from the pure pride of possession, but from the conviction that it is our duty to establish peace where we found anarchy ; to create unity where we found confusion and disintegration ; to enforce on a system of tyrannic rule the eternal principles of justice ; and to quicken into new life and finer knowledge a highly cultured people who for long centuries have been wrapped in sleep. We have not exploited India for our own selfish purposes. It is true that trade has followed the flag, and we have found in India a market for our manufactures ; but India has never yet met the cost of its own administration.

We have done much for India ! When we entered that vast country we found it in a state to which history scarcely furnishes a parallel. The Mogul empire was sinking in the quagmire of its own vices ; society was a chaos ; the petty dynasties generated by the corruption of the empire kept the country in constant agitation, and devastated it continually with internecine wars ; a hundred dynasties grew up and perished in a single generation ; any adventurer who could muster and command a troop of horse might aspire to a throne ; every palace was the scene of conspiracies, treasons, and murders ; Persian and Afghan invaders preyed on the defenceless empire ; famine and slaughter swept away the people

like flies ; they were ground down to dust by the oppressor without and the oppressor within. All the evils which despotism, anarchy, and a cruel religious faith could inflict, were heaped upon the trembling multitudes. We entered, and quelled the wild confusion by one determined, overwhelming power. And since that conquest was achieved by British valour, we have done much for India. We have provided security for life and property ; we have imposed just and equal laws, laws which protect the once trampled Sudra as jealously as the haughty Brahmin ; by the introduction of the railway and the electric telegraph, as well as by the formation of canals for the irrigation of the country in the fierce heat of the hot season, we have rescued millions from the blight of famine ; we have abolished Suttee and the horrors of Juggernaut, with many other murderous rites of the old Hindu religion ; we have educated the native youth, both male and female. It is true that India has had her wrongs ; but a marvellous change has taken place since Burke described her British governors as ‘ ignorant striplings, unpitying birds of prey and of passage.’ Since then, the entire character of her overseers and judges has been changed, and the British name has become the synonym of justice, and righteousness, and truth. There is unrest in India ; but, if she were to rise up and thrust us out, we are strongly of opinion that in three months she would implore us to return.

It is most refreshing on this subject to read the opinion of Vambéry, the celebrated traveller. He wrote to Nawab Abdul Letif Bahadur, an influential native of Bengal, as follows :

‘I am not an Englishman, and I do not ignore the shortcomings of English rule in India ; but I have seen much of the world, both in Europe and Asia, and studied the matter carefully, and I can assure you that England is far in advance of the rest of Europe in point of justice, liberality, and fair dealing with all entrusted to her care.’

On another occasion Vambéry wrote :

‘England has, indeed, done great things for India, and Bismarck was right when he said : “If England were to lose Shakespeare, Milton, and all her literary heroes, that which she has done for India is sufficient to establish for ever her merit in the world of culture.”’

Egypt and the Sudan

When the extravagance of Ismail Pasha, the Khedive of Egypt, brought the country to the verge of bankruptcy, the European creditors took alarm, and a dual control of England and France was established over the financial administration of the land of the Pharaohs.

The discontent of the ruling class, who, by this arrangement, were deprived of the power to rob the

people, and jealousy of European interference, led to a military revolt under Arabi Pashi in 1882. Armed intervention became necessary to save the country from anarchy ; and, as France refused to co-operate, England undertook the task alone. This task was demanded not only in the interests of British capital, but also because of the proximity of Alexandria to the Suez Canal, our highway to India.

A British fleet bombarded and silenced the forts of Alexandria, and the decisive battle of Tel-el-Kebir crushed the rebellion. Meanwhile, a still more formidable uprising was taking place in the Sudan, caused by the oppression of the people by Egyptian officials, and by Arab resentment of European interference with their cherished slave trade. The Mahdi, the promised Messiah of Islam, raised his standard, and attracted to it, not only the Arab warriors of the desert, but also the savage pagan negroes of the Upper Nile. Now, as Egypt is 'the gift of the Nile,' and must control its waters for its very existence, after some delay, through which the life of General Gordon was sacrificed, Britain was compelled to strike another crushing blow for the safeguarding of the country, and the victory of Tel-el-Kebir was followed by that of Omdurman.

These victories placed Egypt and the Sudan practically under British rule, and the man for the hour—the patient and sagacious Lord Cromer—was

given a free hand in the administration of Egyptian affairs.

The beneficial results of these important steps, so reluctantly taken, are not far to seek. Lord Cromer found Egypt on the verge of bankruptcy, with a mutinous army, a poverty-stricken population, a helpless Government, and a formidable foe threatening the Nile, which is its life. He has brought the country out of a condition of bankruptcy into one of financial prosperity; he has changed anarchy and rebellion into the rule of law and order; through the co-operation of Lord Kitchener he has restored to Egypt her lost provinces in the region of the Upper Nile; and her peace and prosperity are assured. And in this work the benefits bestowed on the people have been as great as the benefits conferred on the nation itself.

The daily life of the fellah, or agricultural labourer, has undergone a complete revolution. He no longer groans under the crushing burden of taxation; the extortions of the tax-collector are no longer enforced by the whip; rich and poor have been made equal before the law; the iniquity of vicarious punishment has been abolished; by the great dam at Assouan an increased supply of water has been provided, whereby his crops can be matured; the cruelty of *corvée*, or, in other words, forced labour, has been swept away, and a long shorn and trampled people are among the most prosperous peasantry in the world.

Hope for the Sudan

Turning now from Egypt to the Sudan, the army that liberated that vast country of the upper waters of the Nile, once called the garden and the granary of Egypt, found it devastated and cursed by the most barbarous tyranny the world has ever witnessed. The consequences of Egyptian misrule had been terribly accentuated by the dark days of Dervish dominion. War, pestilence, and famine had done their grievous work. Deserted villages, with roofless houses, everywhere abounded. Once prosperous cities lay in ruins; and were only the lair of wild beasts. Broken furrows and dykes, the remains of former irrigation, where once a patient peasantry had tilled the soil, were blended with the desert sand. Lands once populous had become a wilderness. Out of eight millions of a population existing before the Mahdi's rebellion, six were altogether swept away in less than twenty years; the miserable remnant had lost all the little civilization they once possessed; they had almost forgotten how to cultivate the soil. Education of any kind was totally non-existent. Religion was replaced by a cruel fanaticism. Along the frontiers of Abyssinia and Darfur all was anarchy, and the only commerce was that of slaves.

Now, under our just and kindly rule, slavery is

abolished, and the land is recovering. The Government is doing its utmost to develop the resources of a country where, in a fertile soil, wheat and cotton will flourish in abundance. The song of the toiler blends with the glow of sunset. Multitudes of *sakiehs* drone on the banks of the Nile, raising water for the green crops. The missionary goes forth with his message of mercy. The schoolmaster is abroad. The Gordon College at Khartoum provides technical and scientific instruction. British foremen are training artisans and mechanics. Gum and rubber are being successfully cultivated. The dark tyranny which cursed the land is broken. It is saved to the people, and will laugh with harvests for the stilling of the hunger of the world. So much for British enterprise and British rule.

The British Empire has now reached the limits of its expansion. Other European powers have secured colonial possessions during the last half-century, with the result that all the available regions of the earth have been portioned off. It is now our duty, as far as possible, to consolidate into one great brotherhood the Empire we have won. Indeed, in the interests of universal peace, as well as in the cause of justice and liberty, there ought to be a union of all the English-speaking nations of the earth.

We do not think this union can be achieved by

what has been fitly called 'the sordid bond' of commercialism; but it surely might be achieved as the result of race, and blood, and language. The triumphs of modern science have prepared us for this. The electric telegraph and the Marconigram have crushed the world up, as it were—have brought us all within speaking distance; why, then, should there not be some vital union for food, for defence, and for common aspirations and ambitions on all noble lines?

However this may be, we say, in conclusion, without stooping to abuse those who hold a contrary opinion, that we regard the British Empire, despite those failures and shortcomings which are incident to every human organization, as the greatest agency for good which the world has yet beheld. In the interests not of Great Britain only, but of humanity at large, it has quelled savage hordes, it has dethroned ruthless tyrants, it has freed trampled slaves, it has avenged persecuted peoples, it has brought security and prosperity to countries where they were before unknown, it has thrilled dark and despairing souls with the music of the gospel of divine mercy. And, furthermore, it is the friend of righteousness, it is the palladium of liberty, it is the pioneer of brotherhood, and it is the world's greatest guarantee of unity, peace, and concord. Hail, Britannia!

Thine is the strength of morn,
Thine is the calm of eve.
Thy shadow is cast
On the kingdoms vast,
And where billows of ocean heave.

Danger thy heart doth scorn,
Thou thinkest not of decay.
Thy mighty wings
Are immortal things
That beat in an endless day.

XI. OUR NATIONAL PERILS

God of our fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle line,
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine :
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

The tumult and the shouting dies,
The captains and the kings depart,
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

KIPLING.

A commonwealth ought to be but as one huge Christian personage, one mighty growth and stature of an honest man, as big and compact in virtue as in body ; for look, what the grounds and causes are of single happiness to one man, the same ye shall find them to a whole State.—MILTON.

THE British Empire is a solemn and important trust, for which all its sons are responsible. It involves great duties and great responsibilities. 'Patriotism,' said Bolingbroke, 'must be founded on great principles and supported by great virtues.' For the dignity and advancement of a great nation we need pure and lofty ideals. In a letter

to a contemporary, Lord Meath says: 'Whenever a people have ceased to be inspired by noble ideals, and have permitted themselves to sink into a selfish materialism, however wealthy or outwardly powerful they have appeared to be, they have invariably perished.'

These monitory words should be echoed and re-echoed throughout the land. Britons beyond the sea look to Britons at home for a guiding example. If our life is selfish and unworthy, how can we hope for nobleness in that Greater Britain which God has committed to our care? If the brain reel, what becomes of the other organs of the body? If the heart is diseased, what will be the condition of the extremities? The apple rotten at the core is worthless; the Empire rotten at the centre is effete. We love the dear old land in which our sires have lived and worshipped, and whose dust enshrines their ashes. For this reason, if for no other, we must not be blind to the dangers which threaten it. And these dangers are too glaring and self-evident to be ignored. It is useless to disguise the fact that we are sinking as a people to low levels of life and ambition. Our prosperity is becoming a blight, and our gold a canker. Writing of the decay of Venice, that proud and wealthy Republic of the old civilization, Ruskin says: 'The ancient curse was on her, the

curse of the cities of the plain—"Pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness." From pride to infidelity, from infidelity to the unscrupulous and insatiable pursuit of pleasure, and from this to irremediable degradation, the transitions were swift, like the falling of a star.'

It is an unpleasant task to frame an indictment against the country which we love so well. We are in deep sympathy with Richter, where he says to a carping critic of his nation: 'Sir, even if there were a flaw anywhere, still a true patriot would be bound to maintain a profound silence, especially in such cursed times.'

But there are circumstances under which silence is guilt and a base betrayal of trust, and we believe that such circumstances are now upon us as a people. To quote from Cardinal Vaughan: 'We are face to face with all the dangers belonging to the great social problem. The forces of evil and disorder are busily at work. The genesis of this is plain. For centuries the leisured and wealthy classes grew up selfish and neglectful of the wants of those below them. . . . Meanwhile the working population increased and multiplied beyond measure, until it has now become the master of the whole situation, and can no longer be accounted as a *quantite négligeable*. History has not been written in vain. The wealthier sections

of English society realize that the destruction of the great Roman Empire was brought about by the unspeakable indifference, corruption, and selfishness of the dominant classes. They understand that the pride, the exclusiveness, the luxury of the rich, and the worldliness and wealth of the clergy in France in the last century, superinduced the outbreak of the Revolution, which has flooded Europe with false principles, and is yet far from having spent its destructive force. England, therefore, please God, will follow in the wake neither of ancient Rome nor of modern France. But she has yet much to learn.'

We gladly share the optimism of this great teacher. We deprecate the pessimism which speaks of the decline and fall of the British Empire. We are still undegenerate as a race. We hold in our hands that gospel of love and mercy to which we only need to be faithful to escape every peril which threatens us. But, as Cardinal Vaughan affirms, 'we have yet much to learn.' It is because this is so that these pages have been written, not without the hope that they may stimulate thought and make for righteousness, and that, to quote from Browning,

A Light

Will struggle through these thronging words at last,
As in the angry and tumultuous west
A soft star trembles through the drifting clouds.

The glaring evil of intemperance with regard to intoxicating liquors, which is answerable for so much of our misery and degradation, has been so forcibly pressed home upon the conscience of the nation that these pages may be devoted to problems less frequently considered, which are yet of deep importance in the survey of the perils against which we need to guard.

The Wild Race for Wealth

Among the foremost of our national dangers is the wild race for wealth which characterizes the present generation. The modern greed of gold passes all legitimate bounds. It absorbs the whole energy of life. It is regarded as the one primary object of ambition. And we cannot fail to note how in this eager quest personal character deteriorates. Men become selfish, and self-centred, and regardless of the interests of their fellows. The lines of Milton are profoundly significant :

Extol not riches, then, the toil of fools,
The wise man's cumbrance if not snare, more apt
To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.

To pretend to despise money is mere affectation. It is condensed power ; it means physical comfort ; it wins respect ; it commands homage ; it purchases pleasure ; it opens the door to society. If it achieved

nothing, it would not be so eagerly sought. Yet, after all, it is 'a sordid boon'; and how often it leads to the sharp practice and the dishonesty which are a shame and a plague to the nation! Mining properties are put on the market and run up to high prices, where the only gold they contain has been put into them by a shot-gun. Companies are floated and thrust upon the public which are absolutely worthless. The London Stock Exchange is little better than a gigantic gambling-house. If its dealings were confined to legitimate investment the occupation of nine-tenths of its members would be gone. All this is as a canker in the heart of the empire.

And what are the individuals who win it the better for this acquired wealth—wealth so far in excess of all their legitimate needs? Who among them is blessed by it—made happier, wiser, or in any way nobler? And as for their children, how perilous is the inheritance of idle luxury to which they are heirs!

Meanwhile, think of the suffering to others which much of this acquired and unnecessary wealth has involved. The widows and the orphans who have lost their all through the investment of which they never understood the risk; the poor retired ministers whose scanty provision for old age has been swept remorselessly away; the little shopkeeper whose small savings, the result of the careful thrift of years,

have gone down into this vortex of abominable greed. And all this that a single man or a single family may spend money freely, have a fine house in town and country, eat the choicest foods and drink the richest wines, ride in coaches or motor-cars, keep a yacht, and patronize the turf! Truly, as a great thinker has said, 'Our civilization is founded on the patience of the poor.'

Furthermore, the discontent of the poor is greatly aggravated by the open parade of wealth on the part of the rich. Instances of boundless extravagance are set before them which deepen their sense of injustice. A feast is prepared at the Hotel Cecil for twelve guests which costs £1,000 sterling. Yet hundreds shiver, not a mile away, on the verge of hunger. Women make a boast of never appearing twice in the same gown, while some of their poor sisters, half-clad, huddle closely together under Waterloo Bridge, to shelter each other from the keen east wind. Ladies, so-called, lavish their affection and their money on dogs and cats, while little children are crying for bread. How needful the counsel of Tennyson :

Oh! make thy gold thy vassal, not thy King,
And fling free alms into the beggar's bowl,
And send the day into the darkened heart . . .
Nor care—for Hunger hath an Evil eye—
To vex the moon with fiery gems, or fold
Thy presence in the silk of sumptuous looms,

Justice to the Toiler

In reply to all this, it may be contended that a large portion of the individual wealth of the country has not been acquired in questionable ways, but has accrued to able captains of industry, and enterprising capitalists, who have been fortunate in trade. But how many of these fortunes have been built up as the result of palpable injustice to the toiler? Crowds of miserable workers have been sweated down into infamous conditions of life, or have been crushed and injured through long hours of toil mercilessly imposed, to acquire wealth for the favoured few who have thus exploited their labour.

There is no escape from the miserable fact that our commerce, industry, and laws of property are based on selfishness. The trail of the serpent is over them all. This applies in a special degree to the relations of capital and labour. We joyfully admit that the working man earns more and lives better than ever before ; but, in proportion to the enormous increase of wealth, and the immense piles heaped up by millionaires and semi-millionaires in Great Britain, the working man does not receive his share of the profits and results of his toil. We know that brains and capacity must be paid for, and that the capitalist must receive consideration for his risk and for his loan ; but it is unjust that they should take the lion's

share of all the labour that is done under the sun. Some system of labour co-partnership and profit-sharing is needed which may provide an incentive for efficient industry, and place the distribution of wealth on a more equitable footing. The one thing which all men detest is injustice. The sense of injustice has been the source of all the wars and revolutions which have visited the earth. Under the burden of injustice men will not permanently abide. They will remove it or perish in the effort. This is why Democracy and Socialism are now advancing in all lands with ever-increasing speed ; yea, with a speed which, when their forces have become more intelligent and united, will become irresistible.

It will be good for Great Britain when her leaders of industry realize fully their mission and their opportunity, and make it their first ambition not to live in fine houses and fare sumptuously every day, but to be noble masters among noble workers from whose minds every sense of injustice has been eliminated. 'What profit,' says Sophocles—

What profit is there from our many goods,
If care, with evil thoughts,
Is still the nurse of our prosperity?

The Unemployed

Seeing, as Carlyle teaches, that 'there is a perennial nobleness and sacredness in work,' and that a man

serves the community and also perfects himself by working, it is a strange anomaly of our civilization that so many in our midst should be workless. That men of strong sinews and honest hearts should be willing to work and yet be flung out from the ranks of the toilers to starve, and their wives and children also, is indeed a spectacle at which our rulers may well bow their heads in shame.

Should not something be done on a national scale akin to the factories for the out-of-work and the farm colonies of the 'Salvation Army' and the 'Church Army'? Is it not time that we had civic labour bureaux properly organized and controlled by our municipalities? When men are left to lounge at our public-house corners for weary weeks and months after they have wandered in vain from place to place in search of a job, they lose their fibre and their self-respect. They are robbed of heart and hope, and not seldom are driven by sheer desperation into crime.

The Unemployable

We witnessed some few months ago on the Thames Embankment in London a dreary and heart-rending procession of the unemployed. It needed little discernment to discover that fully one-half of them were such stunted, diseased, and degenerate specimens

of humanity that they were for all useful purposes unemployable. A part of the appalling submerged tenth of the population, they were mentally defective and physically incapable. Lord Rosebery said with deep truth : ' In the rookeries and slums an Imperial race cannot be raised.' Brought up under conditions under which whole families herd together in one room, where food is scanty and of the vilest quality, where common decency is impossible, and incest an unregarded crime—these are the people who swell the ranks of the unfit, who fester in our hospitals and gibber in our asylums. Medical science has shown that there is a physical basis of character, and that where the brain is undeveloped and defective, as it is in most of those who are bred in these vile rookeries, you cannot have a healthy and capable manhood or womanhood. In a recent interview with Dr. Albert Wilson, recorded in *Great Thoughts*, the doctor said : ' Many of these poor creatures throughout the whole of their weary lives are moral invalids, mental cripples. I was dissecting and examining a murderer's brain a few weeks ago under the microscope, and I discovered that he never could have been normal, for the microscope distinctly showed that his cortex—the top layer of the brain, which does all our thinking for us—had fewer normal cells than the brain of an unborn babe ; the cells were less perfect in form ; the nuclei placed in

reserve for further evolution had continued in that undeveloped condition. How, then, could such a man run straight? The thing is impossible.'

Here is another vital and pressing problem for the nation. How can we bring a clean thing out of an unclean, or, failing in that, how can we cleanse these Augean stables and suffer their pollution and their shame to torture us no more? If they were, indeed, stables, and the breed a breed of horses in place of one of men, it would be done. And why not here? We inspect the dwellings of these people and enforce a certain degree of sanitation lest the community should suffer. Why not also inspect their inhabitants and cut off the entail of these derelicts of society? Why are they permitted to multiply and become a leprosy in the State? Our British fetish of liberty needs to be dethroned. We are afraid to interfere even when interference is absolutely necessary for the physical and moral welfare of the community. We need a Bismarck in the social realm. There are certain people who ought not to be permitted to bear offspring. There are others who ought to be protected and cared for in the process. The problem of motherhood is a vital factor with regard to the well-being of the nation. The interests of children ought to be more carefully guarded both before and after they are born.

We have recently strained our monetary resources for the provision of old-age pensions. A claim which we deem still more pressing confronts us with regard to infant life. Some provision needs to be made which will protect married women alike from hunger and from oppressive labour during pregnancy and for some weeks after child-birth. We cannot hope for a healthy and vigorous offspring under the conditions which now obtain with regard to female labour in our great manufacturing centres. Wherever necessary the wages of the father should be subsidized by the State that the mother may be able to fulfil the proper functions which pertain to motherhood. If this were done a marvellous change would result with regard to the physique of the people in less than three generations.

We are spending millions yearly on materials for war. Our best defence from invasion must always be found in the vigorous manhood of the nation. Yet in the greatest city in the land there are tens of thousands of men so feeble and emaciated, as the result of the conditions in which they are reared, that they are totally unfit for the battle of life, and must swell the ranks of the hopeless classes. It is a startling consideration which should be duly weighed, that, while the fit are unworthily limiting the number of their children, the unfit are spawning theirs in our slums and alleys to confound us ; their

ultimate goal being the workhouse, the prison, or an early and unregarded grave.

Let it be frankly admitted that we have a national responsibility with regard to the neglected children of the land. So long as we permit the present conditions of sweated labour, and suffer our gin-palaces to flare at every corner, and render it well-nigh impossible for the poor man to get separation from a drunken wife, or a trampled woman to obtain freedom from a brutal husband, these miseries will remain. It is a scandal not only to our Christianity, but to our humanity, that we do so little for the hapless children at our doors. How touching is the appeal of Elizabeth Barrett Browning :

O my sisters! children small,
Blue-eyed, wailing, through the city—
Our own babes cry in them all;
Let us take them into pity.

What can be Done?

The best political economy is the care and culture of men. That is not the noblest State which can boast of the finest cities, or the largest number of millionaires, but which can present to the world the noblest men, the purest women, the gladdest children, and the sweetest households. As Goldsmith puts it :

Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

What, then, can we do to make Great Britain noble, worthy of its best traditions, and of the gospel of love and mercy whose light has flooded it now for long centuries? We hold no brief for Socialism, but we do hold a brief for something nobler—and that is Christian Brotherhood.

The first and main thing is to improve the condition of the homes of the people. All renovation of the race must begin with the family. We must see that the people are adequately housed, so housed that children can be brought up in decency and comfort. In the next place, the State must so regulate the conditions of labour as to find reasonable security for work, and also provide for the toiler a living wage. Thirdly, we need to create such an environment for the people that their life shall be happy and contented, and that it shall be with them a matter of pride to bear the name of Britons. Patriotism and social misery and injustice cannot exist together. We deprecate what one of our writers has called 'the leprosy of socialistic anti-nationalism.' But social wrongs breed social discontent. Finally, on this theme we need to remove, as far as is possible, those sources of active temptation, whether arising from the drink traffic or any other cause, which make for degradation in the life of the population. Shame upon us if the

lines of the Irish poetess should remain true, which read :

Day by day they lower sink, and lower,
Till the Godlike soul within
Falls crushed, beneath the fearful demon power
Of poverty and sin.

And the work which needs to be done must be done by the nation. The individual is powerless in the presence of such a brood of miseries and wrongs.

‘Again and again,’ says one, ‘the foreigner and the colonial, entering this rich land with too exuberant ideals of its wealth and comfort, have broken into cries of pain and wonder at the revelation of poverty festering round the pillars which support the material greatness of England.’

The Decay of Rural Life

The steady depopulation of our villages is another source of national peril. From thirty to fifty years ago it was a real joy to visit a typical English village, placed about six miles from a railway station, with a population of five or six hundred souls, say in the month of June, when the fresh deep green of the English foliage had lost nothing of its freshness, and the music of the whetstone sharpening the mower’s scythe blended with the glad carol of the lark, and the scent of new-made hay was in the air, and the girls in their print frocks, and the boys in their

corduroys, crept unwillingly to the school under the shadow of the grey old church, and the old men in their smocks chirped like grasshoppers in the sun—
'a haunt of ancient peace.'

But where shall we look for such a village now? Rural England is hastening to decay, with its storehouse of accumulated physical health and clean simplicities of living. Its people have changed the life of the fields for the life of the city. In place of 'the brook from moss-girt fountain welling' they are confronted with 'the foul stream hot with sleepless trade.' The cosy thatched cottages which the roses loved, and the old, high-timbered roofs on which the lichen spread its gold, are exchanged for mean, monotonous streets, where, under darkened skies and in an existence starved of beauty, stunted men and pale women and sickly children pursue their unchanging toil in noisy mills or amid the heat of furnace fires. The countryside used to create and provide the energy which was spent in the towns, but now the breeding-grounds of that energy are being rapidly destroyed, and the cities will be compelled to trust to their own squalid upbringing. As a keen observer has said, 'England is bleeding at the arteries, and it is her reddest blood which is flowing away. The sturdy sons of the village have fled, and have left behind them only the old men, the lame, and the mentally deficient.' Thus

the sweet, calm, healthy life of rural England is vanishing like a dream.

It has been our habit to smile at the idea of 'three acres and a cow.' But there was more in it, when it was eagerly advocated three decades ago, than we had dreamed. Deep in the heart of the country labourer 'love of the land' has survived amid all the years of his hopeless drudgery—a relic from the days when an able-bodied Englishman, born and bred on the land, might cherish the hope of one day calling a corner of it his own. Parliament has of late been attempting by legislation to give certain worthy people direct access to the land, and not without a growing success which kindles a gleam of hope in many aching hearts. Here is the sole prospect we can discern in the work of rural revival, and we wish, with all our mind and soul and strength, a blessing on any effort to meet the primary necessity of finding land for the landless.

In many cases if the people had the land, or at any rate the untilled acres which now run to waste, it would be an immense advantage to the commonweal. We should grow more of our own wheat. Millions of pounds' worth of dairy produce would be provided, for which we now pay the foreigner. Bring the people from the slums back to the land and they could treble alike the produce and the

value of the land. And, further, you might have glad children romping in the sunshine, and pure, sweet lives of men and women, where now you have filth, drunkenness, and degradation.

What cruelty and injustice, and what injury to the State have arisen from the private monopoly of the land!

Is it not a shame beyond all words that some of the very finest men in the Scottish Highlands should have been driven from the soil they loved, the glens which were their pride, and the kirk in which they worshipped, to yield room for deer-stalking? What wonder is it that under such injustice there should be discontent and sullen hate all round us, and that many of our countrymen when they emigrate cease to respect us, and would refuse to defend us against a foreign foe?

Lack of Conscience in the Press

Another serious peril of our times is the lack of conscience in the Press. With regard to some of our daily and weekly publications the question is not asked, 'How can we guide and elevate the people to whom we make our appeal?' but 'How can we make our paper pay by securing the largest sales and, through them, the most profitable advertisements?' Thus the mightiest of all factors

in the moulding of public opinion is made subservient to the selfish greed of a degenerate age.

Not long ago the writer took up a weekly paper in the train, with a circulation of over a million copies, which existed entirely on its detailed reports of every scandalous and unclean case tried in the courts, not only of Great Britain, but of the Continent. It was nothing but a collection of garbage—an unclean vulture feasting on carrion. It may be asked, 'Why complain, if the public will have it so?' To this we reply that the public need guidance, and that in noble fashion, and in a Christian land that guidance should be given in its Press. In place of this we find to-day, in terrible measure, only a gross pandering to unclean passions, and the total lack of principle which arises from selfish greed.

The Modern Novel

The same objection obtains with regard to the modern novel. The literature of any age or country is supposed to be the expression of its prevailing tone of thought. Alas! for the credit of our age, morally and intellectually, if this is really so. We are indeed degenerates if the modern novel presents us faithfully. Persons, such as the writer, who serve on the committees of our free libraries, know

how difficult it is in these days to find novels which are at once strong and pure. And, alas for British womanhood, many of the vilest of them are from the pen of women who are a disgrace to their sex.

For good or evil, the novel has become the expression and expositor of modern life. By no other vehicle is contemporaneous life so adequately expressed, and that expression should be noble and not base. The people do not discriminate; they take the life-history of the fictitious characters present in our novels to heart with a seriousness of which many of our writers and critics have no idea; they do not pause to separate the true from the false. The responsibility of the novelist is, therefore, tremendous. Why, then, do many of our successful writers of fiction regard their craft so frivolously? When impure and unfaithful to their solemn trust, the extent of their malignant influence no man can gauge or measure. The fancy of the reader is polluted, the soul corrupted, and the life degraded. The chief instrument in the education of the imagination is literature, and one of the crying needs of our time is a literature which will elevate and purify, which will fill the mind with great thoughts and noble images, which, in a word, will uplift and not degrade.

How can a noble manhood and a pure woman-

hood be created in a country where the literature of lubricity fires the animal passions and renders the imagination 'as foul as Vulcan's stithy'? Let any man study the neurotic, pallid, effeminate and decadent youth of Paris, and he will understand what we mean. One subject, that of sexual intercourse, regardless of moral restraints, dominates the life and saps the fibre of Parisian life. The growth and spread of erotic prints, shamelessly illustrated, and of the sex novel, has debased and enervated the people. And we in England need to be on our guard against this deadly peril. There are translations from foreign novelists in our book-shops—Zola for example—which ought to be suppressed, and there are novels issued by British authors which pander to vicious tastes and excite unholy passions. Our publishers and managers of free libraries must see to it that we are not cursed and infected by this plague. They must not only check, but rebuke and smite that sham realism which runs riot on one kind of reality only—that of sexual appetite and desire. The sexual passion has been made quite strong enough for all its legitimate purposes, and needs no stimulus at the hand of the writer. Apart altogether from the Pauline dogma of the fall of man, his vivid description of the conflict between the higher and the lower nature in man, the animal and the spiritual, still holds good, and

they inflict a grievous wrong upon the race who, by their flagrant handling of sex questions, inflame the baser part of our nature and degrade the nobler. 'When lust,' says the great John Milton—

When Lust . . .

Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies and embrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.

The condition of the streets of our great towns and cities after dark is another bar sinister on the escutcheon of England. We do not imply for a moment that the social evil in our midst is grosser than in some other nations, but they have the wisdom to conceal it, while we allow it the most glaring publicity. It is permitted to flaunt in our highways as a temptation to unguarded youth, instead of being driven into haunts known only to the vicious and the profligate who desire and seek it. There is tragic meaning in the lines of William Blake :

The harlot's cry from street to street
Shall weave old England's winding-sheet.

The Theatre

Among the various forms of amusement and recreation which appeal to the populace of our time and nation, the theatre takes a foremost place. It

exerts an ever-increasing fascination on the public mind. The Christian Church may flout, ignore, or condemn it ; but it cannot destroy it, or break its spell. When we see thousands of people standing, in rain or shine, for an hour or more, to press into our churches, at the charge of from one to three shillings, we shall be sure that the millennium has arrived.

Yet this is the spectacle which all our cities present with regard to the theatre. The secret of its fascination is not far to seek, since it places vividly before us that in which we are all keenly interested—namely, human life in its most thrilling and impressive situations. ‘In the Drama,’ says Charles Reade, ‘poetry rises from the dead before our eyes—it is no longer entombed in print ; it floats around the scene, ethereal but palpable ; it breathes and burns in heroic shapes, and godlike tones, and looks of fire.’

Such is the fascinating power of the stage, and it ought to be one of the best means of education in the State. In its early history an ethical purpose was involved, and such a purpose should still exist. The object of Tragedy is, by raising pity and terror, to purge the passions, and to elevate the mind above meanness and frivolity. The object of Comedy is, by representing human nature in its happier moods, to lift the mind above the cares of life, to balance

gladness with grief; to relieve, by mirth, the weary weight of the perplexing world. Both these, if not corrupted, are noble arts, ordained to give a noble pleasure, and, in giving that pleasure, to educate.

It must, however, be sorrowfully admitted that, considered as a whole, the theatre is in a most forlorn and debased condition. Tragedy, high comedy, the historical and romantic drama, find few worthy interpreters; and we have offered in their place either worthless melodramas, seductive operettas, in which the beauty of womanhood is prostituted, or feverish and unwholesome society plays, in which the most vicious topics are openly discussed, the vision of virtue is blurred and distorted, and the purest and holiest things of life are treated with derision.

The late Mr. Clement Scott, in his time the first of all our theatrical critics, said, concerning these degrading plays: 'Why should we not frankly call them heathen plays, or plays destitute of any moral sense, plays artfully contrived to attract sympathy for vice, plays that cover detestable selfishness with a glamour of romance and sickly sentiment, plays that bring the power and allurements of good acting, or show, or spectacle, or personal charm, to deaden our moral force and moral fibre? That is where the danger lies.'

There are some among us who advocate the total

abolition of the dramatic censor, who, be it remembered, is the deputy of the Lord Chamberlain, and the responsible administrator of an Act of Parliament. For our part, we maintain that, in the interest of public morals, such censorship should be made far more vigilant and commanding.

All the great empires of antiquity perished of internal corruption. The moral law of God is inexorable. If we break it, it will break us. Surely it is a part of the highest patriotism to keep the heart of this great Empire sound ; and, if it is to be kept sound, we must check immorality in the theatre.

The Decay of Vital Religion

Here we have another source of national peril, of which, alas ! the signs are not far to seek. Our churches are badly attended, especially by the male part of the population. Their spiritual force is becoming enfeebled ; their living membership is drooping and diminishing. Family prayer is becoming less frequent ; private devotion is waning on the part of professing Christians ; the Sabbath is being robbed of its sanctity, and is becoming a day of recreation and of pleasure rather than a day of worship. Religion is losing its hold on the nation.

This neglect of the sanctities of religion is one of the most formidable evils of our time. The strength

and permanence of our Empire depend on the character of its citizens; and vital religion is the mightiest of all factors in the creation of noble character. Who can dream for a single moment that the man out of whose life the sense of the Living God and the hope of immortality have passed away can be the same as a man who 'lives ever in the great Taskmaster's eye' and keeps the vision of his soul fixed on the eternal life beyond the grave?

The decay of religion in the Empire means the decay of the Empire. M. Guizot, in the hour when he was exiled from the France of the Commune, said to Lord Shaftesbury: 'Rely upon it, the religious feeling of your country will be that alone which will save you from convulsion and decay.' It is religion that builds the house where truth and honour love to dwell. Where religion languishes, civilization droops and empires perish. The greatest danger in the present hour for Great Britain is the danger lest the new democracy should become atheistic—lest the nation of Milton and Cromwell, Wesley and Chalmers, should forsake the God who has laid the foundations of her greatness, and through whom alone the top-stone can be put on with rejoicing.

One of the greater prophets of Israel beheld in a vision a river whose waters were charged with healing and life for the nation. And these waters issued from the door of the Temple. A striking symbol of the

fact, which all history demonstrates, that the finest life of a nation issues from the places of its worship—the houses of its prayer.

It is our firm belief that the true account of the growth of human society, in its nobler aspects, is given in the stanzas :

And quickened by the Almighty's breath,
And chastened by His rod,
And taught by angel-visitings,
At length he sought his God ;

And learned to call upon His name,
And in His faith create
A Household and a Fatherland,
A City and a State.

The Church

These considerations force upon us the question of the general condition of the Church, by which we mean, not one denomination only, whether established by law or otherwise, but the whole company of professing Christians organized in different religious bodies.

Where are her spiritual trophies, and by what signs and wonders is she attesting her claim to be the body of Christ charged with the life of her Risen Lord? She exists in name, but can she be said to exist in power? We know she has to confront the forces of worldliness, indifference, and unbelief.

But these, while they may have grown in intensity, are not new enemies in her path. She has triumphed over them in past generations, and, if endued with 'power from on high,' she can triumph over them again. Yet how weak and powerless she appears, and how unworthy of her lofty and sublime mission are some of the expedients by which she endeavours to attract the people. Charles H. Parkhurst, a prominent American thinker, says: 'In the old days of the Church one sermon used to convert three thousand men, but now the temperature is so low that it takes three thousand sermons to convert one man.' Some time ago the Archbishop of York said: 'We have reached a point where, unless some new movement arises, we can move no farther in the elevation of the people.' The strenuous and self-denying effort of the Church to keep abreast of the various activities of the age is both praiseworthy and pathetic. It is weak, however, in that which is the distinguishing feature of its service, and the chief justification of its existence—namely, spiritual power.

Instead of conquering the world, the world has conquered it; and the only remedy before it is a fuller consecration, a deeper spiritual life, on the part of its members, and such a prayerful dependence on God as will constitute it the channel and the instrument of His power. The mind cannot work through

a diseased brain, and the Divine Spirit cannot work through a worldly Church. The organ of His activity must be in harmony with His purpose, which is the transmission of spiritual life. The gift of the Pentecost has never been recalled. The Holy Spirit was given to abide with the Church for ever. The sea of divine influence lies around her as full and fresh as ever ; but the channel must be clear if it is to flow out for the healing and cleansing of the world.

Unless this is secured we cannot hope that our moral and spiritual will keep pace with our material progress.

Conclusion

There can be no question that the Empire we have won is imperilled both by the defects within and by the enemy without. We have excited the jealousy of other powerful nations by the vast colonial possessions which we have acquired, not merely by force of arms or by skill in diplomacy, but by grasping the opportunities thrust upon us by the providence of God.

Events in Europe have also favoured us in a remarkable degree. While France and Germany were wasting their strength in destructive war, we were engaged in extending and consolidating our vast Empire. The work which now lies before us

is not that of further conquest or further extension of dominions, which it is already difficult for us wisely to administer or adequately to defend. What we need is to see that the centre of the Empire is sound. If this is secured, if the heart of the many-wintered oak is healthy and strong, its branches, which yield so broad a shelter, will still flourish, and its leaves continue to lisp in the light and ripple in the rains of heaven.

Oh, let us, as Britons, who love the dear old land which gave us birth, prove worthy of our trust and of the rich inheritance bequeathed to us by our fathers! Let us be saints while citizens, and citizens while saints. Let us make the land we love the sanctuary of religion, the palladium of liberty, the temple of justice, the source of light, the centre of peace, the home of brotherhood and goodwill, the guardian of childhood and innocence, the protector of feebleness and old age, the glory of the civilized world.

We began with Rudyard Kipling, and with admonitory lines from the same patriot-poet we will close :

Far-called, our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And, guarding, calls not Thee to guard—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord! Amen.

XII. THE MINISTRANT LIFE

And so, if I have wrought,
Amassed, or conceived aught
Of beauty, or intelligence, or power,
It is not mine to hoard ;
It stands there to afford
Its generous service, simply, as a flower.

BLISS CARMEN.

I long to hand a full cup of happiness to every human being.
DR. PAYSON.

IN a world in which so many adverse conditions play havoc with human happiness, and where the weak appeal to the strong so pathetically for sympathy and help, there can be no true, self-respecting nobleness except in a ministrant life. Amid much which baffles the wisdom of the wisest there is one duty which is clear, and it is the duty of kindness. To love and to serve is the motto which every true knight should bear on his shield. Love must be the root out of which service springs, since, without it, patience will fail, and the fine flower of sacrifice, red with the sacred blood of Calvary, will never bloom. The spirit of love transfigures every duty, makes obedience a delight, cheats the wilderness of

its weariness, and lifts the feet in service as to the music of a song. Sophocles, pondering the beauty and the plentiful provision of the world, sang, 'It is I, Love, who am the cause of all things,' and that which caused all beauty and plenty can alone suffice for their continuance.

Flowers laugh before it on their beds,
And fragrance on its footing treads ;
It doth preserve the stars from wrong,
Through it the ancient heavens are fresh and strong.

And while love is the fountain-head it must find its issues in service. We must avoid what has been termed the modern spirit, which pities the whole world and helps no one. All knowledge is empty, all culture vain, and all religion a hollow mockery, which does not *do* something. We are not here to dream our life away, or even to build up in grace and beauty our individual character. We are responsible, each according to his own opportunity, for some honest effort made to leave this sad world happier, this evil world better, than we found it. In this war, slackness is infamy, and power, to the last particle, means duty. 'What are we here for,' asks George Eliot, 'if not to make life more tolerable for each other ?'

God has not placed us here to waste our days in the slumber of indolence. A law of duty governs us from youth to age, growing with our growth

and increasing with our strength—duty towards the loved ones in our homes, towards our country, towards humanity at large. We must attempt something which will lighten the gloom and alleviate the sorrow of the world. We must not stand motionless, like veiled statues, in the vision of its needs. We must have regard concerning, not only what we can get out of the world, but also what we can put into the world. We are not here only to get, but we are also here to give, and the more we acquire, the more we owe. We need to pay due interest on our capital. In proportion as we have reaped we must sow.

To receive and not to give is to keep our seed-corn rotting in the garner, when it might be waving in the gold of harvest.

Small Service

In our benevolent purposes we must not underrate the value of small service. Wordsworth says, with as much of beauty as of truth:

Small service is true service while it lasts,
The daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dewdrop from the sun.

There are some who, though neither lacking in pity nor in intention, look on the load of human miseries and allow themselves to be utterly crushed and discouraged by it. They say, in pathetic helplessness,

'What can I do in the presence of such a mountain of calamity?' and, because they cannot do much, they do nothing. In this they are wrong. Because a man cannot do good on a large scale that is no reason that he should fail to do it altogether. John Newton was wiser when he said, 'I see in this world two heaps—one of human happiness, and one of human misery. Now, if I can take but the smallest bit from the one heap and add it to the other, I carry a point. If, as I go home, a child has dropped a halfpenny, and by giving it another I can wipe away its tears, I feel I have done something.'

There is nothing which so tests and proves genuine kindness as small services to the obscure. Neither does any such service end in itself. It is transmitted to others. The man who carries about with him a packet of sweets for distribution to the children he meets by the wayside does something to sweeten the temper of the world. We attach great importance to ostentatious things done in the way of benevolence, and set too slight a value on—

Little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love.

We have far too little faith in the efficacy of what we can do. We do not stretch an accurate line on its far-reaching influence. There is a power in the lowliest service which we do not sufficiently appre-

ciate. Too many are ready to say, 'Oh! if I were not so poor, if I had but more time, more strength, more money, what great things I could achieve!' The grand commendation of the all-seeing Master of life concerning the loyal sister of Bethany was, 'She hath done what she could.' Let us do this, and the first archangel has not more honour. With a very scanty revenue we may have a tear for the unfortunate, a word of encouragement for the despairing, a counsel of hope for him who has no hope for himself, and a message of cheer for the sad and lonely whose years seem all winters. We have known poor men in the Christian Church who have been so rich in faith that others have said, 'When I am dying I should like that man to pray with me,' and we have accounted them wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice. Millionaires, priests, and popes might fitly doff their hats to such men. Through love, and sympathy, and faith's transcendent dower, they are indeed greater than they know. The best good in the world has always been done by personal service, and beyond all proportion poor men have been greater benefactors of the world than the wealthy. The Apostle who stamped Christianity on the brain of Athens and the heart of Rome left behind him only a cloak and a few parchments. Wesley possessed at his decease only a battered teapot and two silver spoons; and one page

from the golden dream of the Bedford tinker has been more to mankind than all the wealth of the Rothschilds.

The Need at Hand

Another matter which demands our attention and our answering sympathy is the need which lies near us. As we are fascinated by the imposing and the great, so we are apt to attach too great importance to the distant. The plain duty is the near duty. There is a wealth of meaning in the exhortation, 'Whatsoever thy *hand* findeth to do, do it with all thy might.' The things we can touch demand the first attention. It may be a desirable thing to direct a stream of beneficence into some distant desert of heathenism where souls are weary and athirst; but, if this be impossible for us, we must be careful not to withhold the 'cup of cold water' from the parched lips which quiver at our side. It is possible to burn with noble ardour for humanity at large, to cherish a worthy anxiety for the public good, and to hold a brief for the righting of distant wrongs, while we are very feebly interested in the needs which are near us. There are many parents who fail to understand the varied dispositions, aspirations, and special aptitudes of their own children. They have no balm for the aching heart, the thwarted

ambition, or the disappointed life at their own fireside. In the same way there are many young people to whom their own parents are practically strangers. They have no suspicion of their difficulties and struggles, and never dream that it may be in their power to lighten the burden of their toil, to make the pathway softer for their tread, or to lessen the number of their grey hairs. The same thing holds good about the servants in the house. We are vastly indebted to them for our comfort, and forget that to have paid them their wages is not our only obligation in their behalf. They also have the right to hear the birds sing, and to see the blossoms fall, and to share the ennobling influences which flow from the sanctities of worship. Alas for us that we are so slightly conscious of the duty near at hand ! A flower sent into a darkened chamber to remind the sufferer that spring has come again, a drive offered to a tired mother or an ailing child, a kindly gift to some worn minister of Christ greatly in need of a holiday—these are small benefits, perhaps, but far too precious to be forgotten or despised. They are winsome and sweet, and charged with that divine beauty which gives the primrose to the woods, the daisy to the grass, and the poppy to the corn. Passing sweet are

The deeds of week-day holiness
Which fall as noiseless as the snow,

The General Need

How bitter is the need for pity and for service in the human world will abundantly appear if we only look around us. How pathetic is the spectacle which impresses the imagination even in our own free, beautiful, and Christian England! Look on a crowd of human faces in any of our great cities. Consider the sin, the shame, the misery, the blindness, the despair; the frightful contrasts between wealth and poverty; the numbers who, humanly speaking, have never had a chance; the sick whose sickness is aggravated by destitution; the unfortunate who have seen better days and who suffer and starve in noble silence; the young girls born in squalid homes whose fatal gift of beauty only too often throws them on the streets; the men and women huddled like beasts in filthy tenements reeking with incest and echoing with curses; the wretched habitations where the untidy hearth, and the unkempt wife, and the wailing children, drive the despairing toiler into the nearest gin-palace as a place of refuge from that which should be home.

To resent the inroads of Socialism is an easy task; but, if we only try to put ourselves in the place of many of our toilers, we shall feel that there is something in our social conditions which needs to be

altered. It is unquestionable that our commerce, industry, and laws of property and wealth are very largely, if not, indeed, entirely, based on selfishness, and that they chafe the thoughtful worker with a sense of hardship and injustice which it is exceedingly difficult to bear meekly and without rebellion. 'To feel,' says John Ruskin, 'their souls withering within them unthanked; to find their whole soul being sunk into an unrecognized abyss; to be counted off into a heap of mechanism, numbered with its wheels and weighed with its hammer strokes,—this Nature bade not, this God blesses not, this humanity for no long time is able to endure.'

Is it to be considered wonderful that, while these conditions obtain, the air should be charged with thunder, and that on the near horizon we should trace the gathering of some fateful and desolating storm? 'We hear much to-day,' says a recent thinker, 'of the undisciplined, pleasure-loving, sordid life of the working classes; and it is in a large measure true. But it is discipline that is lacking throughout the whole nation—the discipline of unselfishness and of ideals, which would urge on the wealthy and successful their responsibilities and duties. The lack of knowledge that we deplore so much is due to a lack of interest and personal contact. It is this which is one of the most ominous tendencies in life to-day; and it is seen in the

avoidance on the part of the rich of the surroundings, the life, and the welfare of the labouring classes from which they derive their wealth ; and among the waste products of the world none is so injurious to the community as the large and increasing class of persons who, though with great wealth, yet with leisure and independence, are content to follow self-centred and low aims, blinding their eyes to the work of social reform which is crying on all sides, not for money, not for sentiment, but for the sympathy of personal service.'

What we need to do is to arise, to break away from our selfishness, and to reconstruct society on the basis of brotherhood, or, in other words, the basis of common sympathy and mutual help. General Booth, of the Salvation Army, considers that the first vital step in saving outcasts is making them feel that some decent human being cares enough for them to take an interest in the question whether they are to rise or sink.

The lines of George MacDonald are appropriate here :

Come, my beloved ! we will haste and go
To those pale faces of our fellow men !
Our loving hearts, burning with summer fire,
Will cast a glow upon their pallidness ;
Our hands will help them, far as servants may ;
Hands are apostles still to saviour-hearts.
So we may share their blessedness with them !

Service of the Strong for the Weak

Every age has its special problems and duties, and the special duty of our time is that involved in the service of the strong for the weak. Those are noble words of St. Paul: 'We, then, that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.' The common tendency on the part of strength is to take the advantage of weakness and to exploit it for its own purposes. If, however, under the inspiration of love, the strong were to set themselves for the help and succour of the weak, the conditions of human society and of human life might be utterly transformed. If the capable and the cultured felt themselves to be responsible for the weak in intelligence; if those who have attained refinement were drawn in tender ministry toward those who are vulgar and rude; if those who are delivered from the bondage of superstition cherished a due regard toward those who are still entangled in its snare; if the lords and masters of commerce, after retaining a fair percentage of the profits of labour, would consent to share the residue with the toilers in their various industries; if the privileged classes now standing apart from the unprivileged 'like rocks that have been rent asunder' with a hungry gulf of selfishness between would set themselves to the task of bridging

the gulf by brotherly sympathy and kindly service,—how much of human isolation and misery would be healed !

Christian Obligation

The obligation for such service should weigh heavily on the Christian conscience, and the due recognition of the apostolic precept in this realm alone would do much to ameliorate the condition of the toiler. Though the kingdom of Christ is not the kingdom of this world, it is still true that godliness is profitable for the life which now is, as well as for that which is to come. The Christian, generally considered, commands success. He possesses a wonderful power of social elevation. You cannot keep him down. You cannot keep him poor. He is master of social forces. You never find him in the slums. The haunts of poverty and destitution are not colonies of Christians. Christians carry their sobriety and virtue into the ordinary concerns of life. They solve for themselves the social problem. They have the clear head, and the steady nerve, and the power of endurance, and the economy of living, which carries them ahead of competitors who are hindered by hereditary fetters, loose and careless living, and extravagant expenditure. It is somewhat remarkable that the social reformer has not inquired more deeply into the secret of this social buoyancy.

A vast amount of the wealth of the world has been committed to Christian hands. The wealth-producing force of the Christian merchant is as inevitable and resistless as growth or gravitation, and it is in this realm that a wholesome check to the selfishness of commerce should be given. Regarding his financial success as prosperity from the Lord, and holding his possessions as a stewardship for divinest uses, the Christian merchant should alleviate in every way possible the lot of the toiler, and should blush to exploit his labour merely for his own selfish advantage. He should see to it that the home of those in his employment is one in which a family can be reared in decency and in comfort, and some portion of his success as a merchant should go to benefit the worker on whose labour he has been dependent for that success.

In some Quaker communities we mark with satisfaction an approximation to this ideal, but, where the Christian conscience is involved, it should be far more general and ameliorative. The industrial world is the supreme opportunity for modern Christian philanthropy and service. The spirit of Christ calls the genius and enterprise of our age to the brother-loving task of the conversion of manufacture and commerce into the ministers of divine righteousness. We can readily understand how a Christian man of great business capacity

may regard his ability to conduct a successful business as the best means by which he can serve God and society ; and he who builds up a great mercantile establishment upon the basis of the Golden Rule does a greater thing than to found orphanages, or build hospitals and churches. His work and service permeate more healthily the common life of man. He ministers to the human labour which serves the world, and to the human independence and self-respect without which labour is only a form of slavery. Money and the ability to acquire property are a public trust, and he who treats them as anything less, not only does a public wrong, but flouts the direct teaching of Jesus Christ. There is nothing under the stars which is not amenable to the authority of Christ.

Christian Men of Business

A Christian man of business has no more right to make personal profit the supreme purpose of his achievement than our Lord had to work miracles for personal profit. He 'pleased not Himself.'

He might have built ■ palace at a word,
 Who sometimes had not where to lay His head ;
 Time was, and He who nourished crowds with bread
 Would not one meal unto Himself afford ;
 Twelve legions girded with angelic sword
 Were at His beck, the scorned and buffeted ;
 He healed another's scratch, His own side bled—
 Side, feet, and hands, with cruel piercings gored ;

Oh wonderful the wonders left undone!
And scarce less wonderful than those He wrought;
Oh self-restraint, passing all human thought,
To have all power, and be as having none!

That is a ghastly mockery of Christianity under which so-called Christian merchants build up colossal fortunes on the bodies of their fellow men. They may found public institutions, or build churches, or enrich missionary funds with money so obtained, but nothing can really sanctify it. The trail of the serpent is over it all.

The noble mind finds unspeakable joy in the conviction that the spirit of love is a rising tide in human life. 'The sense of equality,' says Mr. A. C. Benson, 'the recognition of the rights of the weak, compassion, brotherliness, benevolence, are living ideas, throbbing with fruitful energy. . . . Nothing in the world could be so indicative of the rise in the moral and emotional temperature of the world as the fact that men are increasingly disposed to sacrifice their own ambitions and their own comfort for the sake of others, and are willing to suffer, if the happiness of the race may be increased.'

Oh! who would not a champion be,
In this the lordlier chivalry?

We sometimes hear it said that the men of our time have no incentive to heroic action—that there

is no motive sufficient to inspire men with the heroisms which have glorified the past of human history. But doors of service and of sacrifice are still open in the effort for the social redemption of the world, entering which common men may be transformed into heroes. The majestic base on which are erected the noblest characters is that spiritual poise which arises from the inner controlling conviction that Love is the finest fruit of life issuing in beneficent service for the brotherhood of the race.

It is the essence of all nobleness whatever. In it, with the senses stilled, the mind exalted, and the sympathies quickened and broadened, we feel within us the deep pulsation of the heart of God.

Oh! it is an inspiring thing to feel that there is something in our power which is greater than the worldly wealth we may gather, or the worldly fame we may win—something which will survive fire or flood, detraction or calumny, yea, physical life itself, and that is the service which has blessed and enriched our fellow men, and made the world a little gladder than we found it.

To lay up lasting treasure
Of lowly service rendered, duties done
In charity, soft speech, and stainless days:
These riches shall not fade away in life,
Nor any death dispraise.

‘He that is greatest among you, let him be your servant.’ Thus He spake who came from highest heaven to serve the world, and whose life was one embodiment of this great truth. The great life is the Christ life. The greatest name in the world to-day is that of Him who healed the sick, sought the despairing, saved the lost, rescued the guilty and the fallen. Every life that has been really great, happy, and fruitful, has been that of a servant. The noblest have won honour for themselves by service for others. Love—as Drummond taught, and Christ and St. Paul before him—is the greatest thing in the world. Abraham Lincoln refers to Judge Douglas, who said, ‘I care not whether slavery in the land be voted up or down. It makes not a particle of difference to me.’ ‘I am sorry to perceive,’ said Lincoln, ‘that my friend James Douglas is so constituted that he does not feel the lash the least bit when it falls on another man’s back.’ Lincoln followed the course which made him a royal-hearted brother of the race. And this way all the truly great have travelled, near whose sweet humanity we love to be.

Christ calls men, not for their own sakes, but for man’s sake as well. The saved are to be saviours. The illumined are to be light-givers. The emancipated are to be deliverers from thrall and bondage. This service resulted in making

common men mighty men. Poor, despised men founded the greatest of human societies. They ennobled men in life, and through death their influence has passed into the life of humanity and enriched it as with the river of God. Their streams of love and service have joined the great current of Christ's redeeming life, whose onflowing is healing the nations.

Deep strike Thy roots, O heavenly Vine,
Within our earthly sod :
Most human and yet most divine,
The flower of man and God !

XIII. THE TEACHING OF THE 'RUBAIYAT' OF OMAR KHAYYÁM

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

Whether at Naishapur or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

Think, in this battered Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

A Moment's Halt—a momentary taste
Of Being from the Well amid the Waste—
And Lo !—the phantom Caravan has reached
The Nothing it set out from—Oh, make haste !

OMAR KHAYYÁM.

ORIENTAL poetry includes a much more varied range of subjects than Occidental. A large portion of the religious, metaphysical, historical, mathematical, and philosophical treatises of the East are written in measure and in rhyme. The children's school-books, from Mecca to Borneo,

from Bagdad to Peking, are almost invariably composed in poetic form. They sing into the mind of the young student whatever of knowledge or philosophy they contain.

The literature of the Orient is exceedingly rich in poetry. The names of poets renowned throughout these strange and crowded climes are to be reckoned literally by the thousand. It is thought that Persia alone has produced more than twenty thousand, and, among these, Omar Khayyám, the astronomer-poet of Persia, claims a distinguished place. His most fascinating poem is the 'Rubaiyat,' from a beautiful translation of the larger part of which the verses quoted above are taken.

The translation is from the pen of Edward Fitzgerald, a man of letters, born in the purple, who lived a careless life, and who made music, drawing, and poetry an amusement rather than serious occupation. There was a deep vein of sympathy between the old Persian Omar and the modern Englishman. Both were lovers of pleasure and lovers of beauty; and both were sceptics.

It is fifty years since the first edition of Edward Fitzgerald's translation was published by Bernard Quaritch. It proved a dead failure, and was flung to the second-hand book-stalls, and sold at a penny a copy. Here Gabriel Rossetti, with his friend Algernon Swinburne, discovered and brought into

fame 'the delicate stanzas, chased and chiselled like dainty vessels of pure gold.'

Such is the music of the poem, as expressed in the rendering of FitzGerald, that many of its readers have missed the truth, that it is neither a hymn of praise nor a statement of religious belief, but only a fascinating chant of Agnosticism, with its resultant Epicureanism. It is really the song of a profligate to profligates, the meaning of which is crushed into those lines of Andrew Marvell, who, having pictured 'Time's winged chariot hurrying' on, and the 'deserts of vast eternity' waiting to engulf both beauty and pleasure, concludes with the exhortation :

Let us roll all our strength, and all
Our sweetness, up into one ball ;
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Through the iron gates of life.

'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die'—this is the burden of the song of Omar. To say, as some have said, that he 'denied divinely the divine,' is mere mental juggling. His attitude is expressed far more truthfully by a critic who says : 'He flies, defiantly, from the unrest of ceaseless questioning to Epicurean enjoyment ; he seeks to drown doubt in the wine-cup, to stupefy mental yearning in the arms of beauty. He tries to employ his senses as allies to assist him in stilling

the voice of the ever vainly searching soul. Love and wine are called in as narcotics to soothe restless attempts to solve the mystery of life and death, to read the riddle of the earth, to help him to bear the burden of the unintelligible world.'

Take, in evidence of this, the following stanzas addressed to the Persian wanton at his side :

Ah ! my Beloved, fill the cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and Future Fears ;
To-morrow!—why, *To-morrow* I may be
 Myself with yesterday's seven thousand years.

Ah ! make the most of what we yet may spend,
 Before we too into the dust descend ;
 Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie,
 Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End.

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
 A Flask of Wine, a book of Verse—and Thou
 Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
 The Wilderness is Paradise enow.

The Persian profligate turns, like Solomon, and Nero, and Byron, to sensual indulgence for the solution of the problem of life.

Life void of wine, and minstrels with their lutes,
 And the soft murmurs of Irakian flutes,
 Were nothing worth : I scan the world and see,
 Save pleasure, life yields only bitter fruits.

But it is pleasure on the low and animal plane he seeks, and, when obtained, it does not satisfy. Still 'the world is out of joint,' and he would alter things

if he had the power, since they are, at their best, disappointing. The soul is still hungry and unsatisfied after all the sweet baits of the flesh have been devoured. So to his paramour he says :

Ah, love ! could I and thou with fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would we not shatter it to bits—and then
Remould it nearer to the Heart's Desire !

They who complain of life as it is have generally spoilt it through their own abuse of it. They have sucked the orange dry, and come to the rind and found it bitter. The profligate and the sensualist are creatures so unfortunate that their very vices desert them. While the joys of the intellect and the conscience are never exhausted, indulgence in the lusts of the flesh soon brings satiety and disgust. Nothing is so wearing as what is called 'fast life.' The hot sun of lust soon dries up the sap of a man's being, and renders him a shrivelled thing. There are men who, in a terrible phrase of their own coining, are 'used up at thirty.' Desire remains, but the power to satisfy it droops and withers. They goad the steed, but it staggers, tired out, and will not answer to the spur. Old in feeling, sick at heart, worn out before their time, they rail at the life which they have poisoned. Shakespeare depicts for us a man of this order in 'the melancholy Jacques.' In his pettish humour he sets himself to 'rail against

our mistress, the world, and all our misery.' The good Duke says :

Most mischievous, foul sin, in chiding sin ;
 For thou thyself hast been a libertine
 As sensual as the brutish sting itself ;
 And all the embossed sores and headed evils,
 Which thou with licence of free foot hast caught,
 Wouldst thou disgorge into the general world.

The Persian Omar lived long enough, like Solomon, to find that the bitterest fruits which grow spring from the mire of sensual pleasure. Place him side by side with Dante and with Browning. His soft songs of pleasure may attract us, but they are syren music, and their end is the swine-trough. Though poets may lure him to the debasing slumber, man can never rest in the pleasure which means degradation. He can find rest only in the pursuit of virtue and in the smile of God. How thin and poor is Omar Khayyám's Epicurean sensualism—the philosophy of the sty—when compared with Browning's faith :

Therefore to whom turn I but to Thee, the ineffable name ?

Builder and maker, Thou, of houses not made with hands :
 What have fear of change from Thee who art ever the same ?

Doubt that Thy power can fill the heart that Thy power
 expands ?

In one of the cities of Asia Minor there is a statue of the profligate Sardanapalus, where he is represented as snapping his fingers in the air and uttering

the words engraven on the pedestal: 'Eat, drink, and enjoy thyself—the rest is nothing.'

Let his admirers veil it as they will, this is the philosophy of Omar. We feel, in reading quatrain after quatrain, that the message of the author is this: All is vanity; therefore enjoy what life has to offer, and go to your long sleep, knowing that, whatever may be behind the veil, no human mind can penetrate its mystery. The following stanzas contain the kernel of the singer's pessimistic thought:

Alike for those who for To-day prepare,
And those that after some To-morrow stare,
A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries,
'Fools, your Reward is neither Here nor There!'

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discussed
Of the Two Worlds so learnedly are thrust

Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
Are scattered, and their Mouths are stopped with Dust.

Strange, is it not? that, of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of Darkness through,

Not one returns to tell us of the Road
Which, to discover, we must travel too?

The Revelations of Devout and Learned
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burned,

Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep,
They told their fellows, and to Sleep returned.

The Christ of God

To those of us who believe that One *has* come
forth from the unseen to tell us what we are, and

whither we are going, all this is melancholy reading. The members of the Omar Khayyám Club may wear their red roses and drink their red wine at their annual banquets in honour of the astronomer-poet of Persia; but, despite the witching music of his verse, with its wave-like rise and fall and pause, we would rather have the first three verses of the fourteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel than all the Persian poet-profligate ever penned.

This cry of a baffled intellect after truth unattainable by the unassisted reason of man invests with peculiar force the question of one of the disciples to the Divine Teacher: 'To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.' 'The picturesque simile,' says J. R. Illingworth, 'of the bird flying in from the night, we know not whence, and out in the night again, we know not where, is as true of human life to-day, as when it was first urged, in the hall of Eadwine, as an argument for listening to the Christian teacher. With all our science, we know nothing, unless from revelation, of the ultimate origin or final destiny of man; why he exists, and how the purpose of his existence can best be carried out.' But there are noble guesses as well as guesses of meaner quality with regard to this unparalleled problem.

It is true that this tent-maker, unlike the greater tent-maker of Tarsus, lacked the revelation of the

Christ of God ; but the Eastern sky, with all its stars, was above him, and that grace of the Divine Spirit, which is the natural endowment of man—'the Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world'—was near, with its celestial visitings, to lead him into higher truth than that which the 'Rubaiyat' breathes. Furthermore, a nobler philosophy was at hand alike in Súfi Pantheism, in the lofty mysticism of Háfiz, and in the stern Theism of Mahomet. But, enslaved by sensual passion, he discards any Providence but heedless Destiny, and the sensualism into which he plunges obscures the evidence of finer spiritual truth by impairing the sentiments which make it visible. St. Paul speaks of things which are 'spiritually discerned.' The things of God are not revealed to the brute or to the brutish man. The heart can truly see only that which it loves. We must *be* that we may see, as well as *see* that we may be.

Faults in the life breed errors in the brain.

Fortunately for us we have, in our own Tennyson, another poet-teacher, whose verse is not less musical and entrancing, and who, from a mightier Master than Omar the Persian, has taught us truer and diviner things. We do not gaze hopelessly and with deep and despairing dejection upon the inscrutable. We do not turn to the wine-cup to

still the unquiet cravings of a soul which has lost its hold of God and Immortality. We believe, and trust, and worship, and aspire. We do not say :

Waste not your hour, nor in vain pursuit
Of this and that endeavour and dispute ;
Better be jocund with the fruitful grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, fruit.

The fruit of virtue is not bitter, neither is it barren. 'The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.' *There is a good* which is worth seeking in this world of mire and change, and that good is holy character—the character which regulates life and which determines destiny. Therefore do we join in the noble prayer of Sophocles: 'Oh that my lot might lead me in the path of holy innocence of thought and deed, the path which august laws ordain—laws which in the highest heaven had their birth, neither did the race of mortal men beget them, nor shall oblivion ever put them to sleep!'

A God of Love

Furthermore, we believe in the beneficence and tenderness of the Power under whose shadow we abide. While we recognize the splendour, the wonder, and we had almost said the terror, which

lie folded in the soul of man, we are sure that One who is Forgiving Love presides over his destiny. Our sorrows, struggles, and aspirations are not vain and meaningless. We lie in the Hand of God, the God revealed in Jesus Christ, and need not tremble like birds in the hand of the fowler. We may have sinned, nay, *we all have sinned*; but to 'dree our weird' is not the only thing which is left for us. It is true that the consequences of our mortal life are continuous, and that some form of penalty for sin is inevitable. But over all this there is the merciful God who has made provision for the pardon of sin; the living God who is 'in all, and through all, and over all,' and is ever pressing upon us with His infinite resources to interrupt and roll back the fatal current; the God who knows our frame and remembers that we are dust; the pitying Father who forgives not seven times, but seventy times seven.

Thus we resent and repudiate the fatalistic philosophy which says:

The moving finger writes, and, having writ,
Moves on; nor all your piety nor wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.

And that inverted bowl they call the sky,
Whereunder, crawling, cooped, we live and die;

Lift not your hands to *î* for help—for it
As impotently rolls as you or I.

It is not true! That infinite blue heaven, that bended dome, symbolizes for us the outspread wings of divine compassion—the vastness of the mercy which is higher than our finite thought ‘as the heaven is high above the earth.’ Under its boundless beatitude we do not crawl and die, as insects, but trust and worship and adore, as men.

What shall we say, again, of the following verses, which, after the manner of all dark and bitter scepticisms, first misrepresent God and then blaspheme Him?

O Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the road I was to wander in,

Thou wilt not with predestined evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my fall to sin!

O Thou, who man of baser earth didst make,
And even with Paradise devise the snake;

For all the sin wherewith the face of man
Is blackened—man’s forgiveness give—and take!

We find in these lines, as others acquainted with the Bodleian manuscript of the poem have found, more of the presuming sceptic, Edward FitzGerald, than of Omar; but how are they justified in the light of the revelation of a merciful and forgiving God in Jesus Christ? We are not the prey of gods who kill us for their sport as wanton boys kill flies, but the ‘offspring,’ as St. Paul declared, of a divine Father, ‘whose tender mercies are over all His works,’

Human Liberty

If the expression may be pardoned, by an act of divine daring, we have been invested with liberty of choice. We have power to choose the evil and reject the good, or to spurn the evil and embrace the good. It is indeed a solemn dispensation which has placed our history and our happiness so largely in our own power; but, daring though the dispensation may appear, it is the daring of All-wise and All-powerful Love sure of Its own resources.

Nor can we conceive any meaning or any glory in an allegiance against which there was no power to rebel. The Creator would not have us machines, but men. Our liberty expresses the beautiful hunger of God for the free love of His creatures. 'Take away from virtue the element of will,' says Origen, 'and you take away its very essence.' There can be no such thing as necessitated holiness. Virtuous mechanisms could not contribute either to the dignity of the creature or the glory of the Creator. 'To murmur,' says Rousseau, 'because God has not hindered man from doing evil is to murmur at his being made of an excellent nature, at his actions being clothed with the moral character which ennobles them, at his having obtained the right to be virtuous. What! To hinder man from becoming wicked, must he needs be reduced to

instinct and made a brute of? No, God of my soul, I shall never reproach Thee for having created me in Thine image, that I might be free, and good, and happy like Thyself.'

There is a variant in one of the finest verses of 'In Memoriam,' which Tennyson allowed intimate eyes to see, bearing in an illuminative way on this question of sin and human freedom. It ran :

Thou seemest human and divine,
Thou madest man, without, within;
But who shall say Thou madest sin?
Or who shall say, 'It is not mine'?

But then there is the serpent in the garden. Yes! and there is also the Deliverer who shall bruise the serpent's head.

A Degrading Philosophy

It is an insult to our intelligence to offer us the distorted views of this Persian sceptic as philosophy. His positions are contradictory and absurd in the last degree. He has many things to say about God and man, and they are far from complimentary to either. Neither the Creator nor the creature appears to advantage in his twilight imaginings :

We are no other than a moving row
Of magic shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with this sun-illumined lantern held
In midnight by the master of the show.

Impotent pieces of the game he plays
Upon this chequer-board of nights and days ;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and stays,
And one by one back in the closet lays.

This is one of our chief objections to Atheism, that it makes for the degradation of man. It takes all grandeur from the beatings of the heart. It obliterates the distinction betwixt matter and spirit ; between matter which is determined from without and spirit which is self-determined—able to act from a sense of duty, and amenable to moral law. According to this teaching we are ‘magnetic mockeries,’ mere ‘cunning casts of clay,’ insects in the beam, worms in the slime. There is no royalty in us which we should venerate, no moral height toward which we should aspire. Pity, then, it is that our thirst is so insatiate, and our desires so limitless. If our destiny is only that of the brute, would it not have been better that we should have been fashioned like the brute ? Why has the Being who fashioned us set eternity in our hearts ? Why do we dream of liberty if we are mere automata—puppets moved by wires in invisible hands ? Let the showman behind the curtain throw his dolls into the box, villains and saints, profligates and patriots, harlots and philanthropists ; guilt is nothing, virtue is nothing. ‘Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die !’

The fascination of this poem is great, but it is the fascination of the serpent, glittering and beautiful, but deadly; and we need some Ithuriel spear to reveal it as it is, that it may not abuse the public ear. It should be something more than a witching melody of jewelled stanzas which should lead us to accept, at the hands of an Eastern profligate, teaching so degrading and so hopeless as this. Rather let us cherish with deepening thankfulness the faith expressed in the inspiring lines of a poet-philosopher more finely equipped than the Persian Omar:

Oh! yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

XIV. APPLIED CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

O Lord ! that I could give my life for others,
With no ends of my own,
That I could pour myself into my brothers,
And live for them alone !

Such was the life Thou livedst ; self-abjuring,
Thine own pains never easing,
Our burdens bearing, our just doom enduring,
A life without self-pleasing !

FABER.

Whoever introduces into public affairs the principles of primitive Christianity will change the face of the world.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

THERE is to-day no question so momentous as that of the condition of the people, the condition of the great mass of the people—in a word, what we may call the social question. To reform and improve the condition of the masses ; to secure to every man, by labour and fair wages, decent food, clothing, and habitation ; to educate him in a knowledge of his duties to his God, his neighbour, and himself ; to give him instruction suitable to his station and his needs ; to afford him proper rest

and opportunity for the care of his family, and for the sanctification of his soul ; to teach him willingly to earn his bread in the sweat of his brow, and contentment in a life of honourable toil,—this is the problem which confronts us to-day, and which demands some adequate solution.

The social unrest is visible and audible around us, and all noble men are bound to consider what can be done to right the wrongs and heal the wounds, and wipe away the tears, of the millions who plead for pity and for justice. The poverty, the hopeless squalour, the grinding toil, the want of work for willing hands that make a bitter chance of the poor man's lot, the unfairness often manifested in the distribution of the fruits of his labour, the dreary outlook which old age presents when the limbs are feeble and the eyes are dim, together with the manifold social and economic evils which render the condition of the poor intolerable, demand reflection and the application of some sufficient remedy.

Futile Attempts at a Remedy

Through the long centuries of their trouble and disappointment, men have eagerly, and with unquenchable hope, looked forward to a Golden Age. With hungry souls they have devoured the teachings of a thousand and one who have declared themselves

possessed of a panacea for human ills. With feverish restlessness they have turned to the last new thing, in the hope that it would prove the open sesame of their desires. With intensest enthusiasm they have followed the self-constituted leaders who have promised them an earthly paradise. They have even, in frenzied revolution, deluged cities with blood to attain the ends for which they have longed and sighed in their penury and sorrow. But the promised land is still unreached. Ever and anon the sheen of its walls seems to strike through the fog and gloom, but the result as yet has been only the chase of the rainbow and the mirage of the desert.

Beautiful dreams of equality have occupied the souls of men, but they have been shattered by the laws of Nature which govern the production of wealth, and the laws of the soul which create personal superiority. Liberty and fraternity are possible ; but equality, except in opportunity, is but a dream. It is evident alike from the study of Nature, and the review of history, and the scrutiny of the families of men, that equality is not a part of the divine plan in the establishment of the divine kingdom. Graven upon the rocks, painted richly upon the blossoms, dyed deeply in the noblest life-blood of the race, is the lesson of inexorable inequality — inequality of faculties, of opportunity, and of character.

All schemes, therefore, that involve the arbitrary restriction of powers, the forced surrender of privileges, the compelled limitation of accumulated wealth, the renunciation of the heritage of education and culture on the part of individuals, are unnatural expedients, doomed to disaster by the inexorable laws of physical and mental life under which we exist, and which we are as powerless to alter as to govern the changes of the moon. We may change our monarchies for republics, but this does not really affect the condition of the toiler. We may reduce all men to a dead level by some mighty revolution for one day, but, on the next, the capable and the thrifty will be in the ascendant. We may chafe at this ; we may resent it, dreaming that we are wiser than God ; but we cannot alter it.

And this fact needs printing on the brain of the labour leader with his crude economic heresies, and on that of the professional agitator with his insane incentives to anarchy.

And yet there is injustice, and the needs of the socially unfortunate and the industrially oppressed demand consideration and relief.

The True Remedy

Where is this relief to be found? Whence can it arise? It is found in genuine Christianity faithfully

applied. 'A new commandment,' said the Great Teacher, 'I give unto you, That ye love one another ; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.' No idle words were these, but words uttered under the shadow of the cross on which He was about to die for the redemption and uplifting of the world. The great devil of the world is selfishness, and it was this devil which Christ came into the world to slay. That which constitutes selfishness in its essence is seeking objects, however good in themselves, for self, and self alone, reckless of the welfare and the happiness of others, with no movements of benevolent impulse to qualify our personal aims, and no consciousness of obligation arising out of our privileges. This spirit the New Commandment grandly rebukes, calling men forth from their own selfish interests to the service of love. Emerson says that 'it is the fine souls who serve us, and not what is called the fine society.'

There can be no discord or wrong where all are working for the good of all. Let Christian love have full sway, and the social life of the world would be perfect. It holds the hope of the true comity of nations. If ever the dream of the prophet gazing into the future from the mount of vision is to harden into fact ; if what is true and noble in the longings of philosophy as in Plato's *Republic* is to be realized ; if St. John's 'City of God' seen

shining from afar is ever to come down out of heaven ; if ever Herbert Spencer's 'equilibrium' is to bring equipoise to the unbalanced state of the world,—it must all be by the supremacy and pregnant force of Christian love. The highest and best of the world's dreams and hopes is what Christianity offers to give, and is giving, so far as it is intelligently accepted and obeyed. The Christian ideal is absolute perfection. Nothing better can be found : all other things are good only in so far as they approach it.

The absurdity of supposing that the moral ideal of Christianity, as expressed in the words and embodied in the life of our divine Lord, can be outstripped or left behind, is too absurd for refutation. The Christian ideal gives us infinite room. Let the chariot wheels of our progress come up to it before we talk of leaving it behind !

The Teaching of Christ

Mr. F. G. Peabody, in his able treatise, entitled *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, says : ' Each period in civilization has had, in turn, its own peculiar interest and its own spiritual demands, and each, in turn, following its own path back to the teaching of Jesus, has found there what seemed an extraordinary adaptation of that teaching to immediate

issues and needs. This is one of the most surprising traits of the gospel. It seems to each age to have been written for the sake of the special problems which at the moment appear most pressing. As each new transition in human interest occurs, the teaching of Jesus seems to possess new value. . . . This extraordinary capacity for new adaptations, this quality of comprehensiveness in the teaching of Jesus, which so many evidences of the past illustrate, prepares us, in our turn, for its fresh applicability to the question which most concerns the present age. As it has happened a thousand times before, so it is likely to happen again, that the gospel, examined afresh with a new problem in mind, will seem again to have been written in large part to meet the needs of the new age. Words and deeds which other generations have found perplexing or obscure may be illuminated with meaning, as one now sees them in the light of the new social agitation and hope. It will seem, perhaps, as it has seemed so often before, that no other age could have adequately appreciated the teaching of Jesus ; as if His prophetic mind must have looked across the centuries and discerned the distant coming of social conflicts and aspirations which in His own time were insignificant, but which are now universal and profound. Such is the comprehensiveness of the teaching of Jesus.'

No one can study that teaching without discerning

its special application to the toiler, teaching accented by that long delay of 'the Prince of Life' in the carpenter's shop, which invests honest labour with an untold dignity.

To quote from Henry Van Dyke :

They who tread the path of labour follow where Christ's feet
have trod,

They who work without complaining do the holy will of God ;
Where the weary toil together, there am I among My own,
Where the tired workman sleepeth, there am I with him alone.

This is the gospel of labour—ring it, ye bells of the kirk,
The Lord of Love came down from above to live with the men
who work.

The system of Jesus has no toleration for the indolent loungeur who, while living on the fruits of the toil of others, utterly disregards, if he does not despise, the toiler to whom, for the most part, he owes his luxury and ease. On all the wealthy and the privileged it urges the claim of service and of sacrifice. In its eyes the measure of privilege represents the measure of responsibility, nor can any distinction of worldly advantage alter the fact of brotherhood. Says Mr. F. G. Peabody : ' Primarily devoted as the message of Jesus is to the individual, it is none the less true that, with constant and solemn reiteration, He affirms the test of the salvation of the individual to reside in his contribution to social service.' In this lies the essence of the New Commandment.

The New Commandment affirms that we are to love as Christ loved, to pity as Christ pitied, and, as far as in us lies, to succour as Christ succoured. We are to love one another *as* He has loved us. Jesus Christ stood for the principle of sacrifice. His faith concerning human life was that all men are brothers, sons of a common Father, bound together by eternal relationships, united by common interests. He believed that the suffering of one Man was the suffering of all; the welfare of each the interest and responsibility of all. He taught that the principle of selfishness which lay underneath human institutions was not of God, but of the devil—unnatural, outrageous, a violation of humanity, a denial of God. He gave the Sermon on the Mount as the constitution of a divine society; and he who pronounces it impracticable and impossible, though he be ten times a bishop of the Church, is a traitor to the Christ of God and to the kingdom of God. Such a degradation of divine ideas is blasphemy. It only shows how far they are yet beyond us, and how Christianity contains the secret and the power of endless progress.

The Call to the Christian Church

The New Commandment is Christ's call to the Church to accept His social ideal and dedicate itself

to its realization in theology and science, in government and industry; the call for men who believe in this ideal with such a faith that they will make its realization the aim of their life, and count nothing as prosperity which is not the result of obedience to that aim. It is a simple obligation laid on every Christian—

To make the world within his reach
 Something the better for his being,
 And gladder for his human speech.

Everything that Jesus did, conscience presents to His followers as their duty and their law. In Him they behold, as in a spotless mirror, the solemn beauty of their calling. They have not fully entered into Christ's salvation; He has not fully rescued and redeemed them into His own divine life, until that which is true of Him is also true of them. 'Ye are My witnesses,' said the Divine Master; and the problem how to save the Church must first be solved, before the Church can save the world. To be fully saved is to be a Christ-like man in the world, a man in whom the Incarnation is perpetuated, and through whom Christ can still be the Saviour of men. (Social healing and uplifting will be the outgrowth of the incarnation of the divine, sacrificial Christ-life in the life of humanity.) When men touch each other with the touch of Christ, and love each other with the love of Christ, and serve each other

with the sacrificial heart of Christ, then the race will be one happy and concordant family. The solvent of every problem of society is the love of God as revealed in the pardoning, pitying, and healing mercy of God in Christ.

The Human Claim

The toiling and suffering masses of the people are human, and therefore of our brotherhood and our sisterhood, loved by God, redeemed by the sacrifice of the Cross, and called to the kingdom of heaven. For this reason, the Christian man in command of resources, whether of wealth, social standing, ripe experience, cultured intelligence, or tender affection, must open his heart to a new love, his spirit to a new ambition. He must bear his part of 'the noble burden' of the stricken, suffering race. No Christian is true to Christ, nor has grasped the meaning of the Cross, who is not a vicarious helper of his fellow men. Wherever there is a heart touched by the passion of Christ, there will be tender hands stretched out, uplifting humanity to better things. The Christian has no right to superabundance when his social brother is in want. While this obtains in the Church, she is false to the spirit of her Master, and helpless to accomplish the God-like work of social redemption.

Our hope for social emancipation and uplifting will reach its fulfilment, not through social mechanisms

or industrial crises, but through our acting, as Frederick Maurice says, 'in the faith that the constraining love of Christ is the mightiest power in the universe.'

Society is to be saved by men and women who shall pour their lives and possessions as streams of love and service into the great current of Christ's redeeming life, whose on-flowing is for the healing of the nations.

Still in glorious endeavour,
His bleeding feet we track ;
Toiling up new Calvaries ever,
With the Cross that turns not back.

The living Son of God calls 'the sacramental host of His elect' to war against the evils which desolate the world. He is seeking among the Churches Christ-men and Christ-women, who will lift high the hallowed Cross as the law of life and the symbol of justice, and who will share with Him the joy of redeeming and restoring humanity. 'When each of you,' says Lamennais, 'loving all men as brothers, shall act to each other like brothers; when each of you, seeking his own well-being and the well-being of all, shall identify his life with the life of all, and his interest with the interest of all; when each shall be ever ready to sacrifice himself for all the members of the common family, and we are equally ready to sacrifice ourselves for Him—most of

the evils which now weigh upon the human race will disappear, as the gathering mists of the horizon fly at sunrise, and the will of God will be fulfilled. For it is His will that love shall unite the shattered members of humanity, and organize them into a single whole, so that humanity may be one, even as He is One.' Christ's spirit of love, if honestly applied, will restore society. His infinite tenderness towards the poor and needy and oppressed is the world's hope to-day.

If we would be saved as a society, Christian love must be no longer a sentiment, but a fact.

These cravings of the age in Socialism are a call from God, a call to Christian service.

Not sowing hedgerow texts, and passing by,
Nor dealing goodly counsel from a height
That makes the lowest hate it ; but a voice
Of comfort, and an open hand of help.

A New Inspiration

The vision of the suffering yet conquering Christ should thrill His Church with a new passion and a new inspiration. His people should take up their cross and follow Him in the grandeur of sacrificial love and service. The very essence of Christianity consists in a willingness to deny self for the benefit of others. Its central fact is redemption by the Cross—a great act of self-sacrificing love on the part

of the Son of God for the redemption and restoration of humanity. It is the religion of the Cross and the Crucified. It makes the sorrow of the world the sorrow of the Church, the shame of the world its shame, the interest of the world its interest, and the emancipation of the world its passion.

There may be selfishness in religion as well as in other spheres, and it is viler in this sphere than in any other, because it is a perversion of the noblest of all sentiments. We note in some people a feverish desire to make the best of both worlds. If we listen to their conversation we find that their predominant self-interest has laid its hand upon everything, even upon God Himself. We hear of nothing but the necessity of their own salvation, their own fitness for heaven, their own eternal well-being. They must make their own everlasting bread and water sure, whatever becomes of the hungering world. They must secure their own salvation, if the majority of men are doomed to despair. All this is a mere travesty of genuine Christianity. It is an insult to the doctrine of the Cross.

What Christians need to-day is a divine passion for righteousness, and a clearer vision of the Cross. The moral influence of the Church is in danger of being ruined by comfort, sapped by self-indulgence. When our Lord hung upon the Cross they cried in bitter scorn, 'He saved others: Himself He cannot

save.' It was true. If He had saved Himself, He never would have saved others. If He had come down from the Cross, He would never have redeemed the world. And in like manner, if His Church saves herself, she cannot save others. Her triumphs in all ages have been in exact proportion to her fidelity to the doctrine of the Cross manifested in service and self-sacrifice. Oh that every professing Christian would write his name beneath the stirring lines :

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall the sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land !

Individual Uplifting

The question how we are to raise the masses resolves itself at last into the question how we are to raise the individual man ; for the masses are but a congregation of individuals. Individual transformation and uplifting is the only real and sufficing remedy.

It is for this reason that we find inscribed over the shining portal of the kingdom of God the great utterance of its Divine Founder : 'Ye must be born again.' He demands, as the absolute condition of entrance to the privileges of His kingdom, the experience of what is termed conversion, or, in other

words, such a turning from sin to virtue, and from self to God, as constitutes a new life.

All merely human schemes of amelioration and uplifting are baffled at the outset by the moral unpreparedness of those whom they seek to benefit. It is here where the system propounded by Mr. Blatchford fails. His scheme rests on a purely materialistic basis. He assumes that the principal evils of life are the visible ones, and that they can be removed by visible means. He attaches very little importance to the kingdom of the Spirit, to that kingdom of personal character which is the vital problem. It is in this kingdom that our weal or woe really lies. It is to the want of light, and order, and self-control in this kingdom that most of the ills of life are due. You may give a man better wages, but it does not therefore follow that you have secured for him a happier home. His wages may be squandered in drink or in gambling, and his home be left as desolate, and the lot of his children as hopeless, as ever.

This is the rock on which every form of Socialism which rejects God's provision for human uplifting splits. You cannot have a sound and safe self-governing community until its individual members have learned *self-government*. Edmund Burke said: 'Men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their

own appetite. . . . Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere; and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without.' Herbert Spencer remarks: 'There seems to be no getting people to accept the truth, which, nevertheless, is conspicuous enough, that the welfare of a society and the justice of its arrangements are at bottom dependent on the character of its members. . . . The belief, not only of the Socialists, but also of those so-called Liberals who are diligently preparing the way for them, is that, by due skill, an ill-working humanity may be framed into well-working institutions. It is a delusion. The defective natures of citizens will show themselves in the bad actions of whatever social structure they are arranged into.' In a book from the pen of an eminent Socialist, entitled, *The Story of my Dictatorship*, we find the following: 'But the masses, the ignorant masses, notwithstanding their undoubted good qualities—both actual and potential—are as yet unfit for forming a community such as you desire.'

In fullest harmony with this was the teaching of the great French philosopher, Le Play, who maintained that the social question was not fundamentally one of economic transformation or of the abolition of privileges, but one of domestic integrity, industrial thrift, moral education, and living

religion. The issue, he held, was ethical, rather than economic.

An object-lesson of the saddest kind illustrative of this fact will be found in any procession of the indigent and unemployed in any of our large cities. It will be discovered on examination that at least three-fifths of them are not merely unemployed, but practically unemployable, either as the result of their own vices or of a fatal heritage of weakness and incapacity received from a vicious parentage.

The lesson of history, as well as the doctrine of Christianity, is that 'out of the heart are the issues of life.'

'Your Fouriers failed,' writes Mrs. Browning—

Your Fouriers failed
Because not poets enough to understand
That life develops from within.

The real social problem to be solved is how to raise the desires, hopes, views of life, in the very poorest class; how to help them to become better in themselves. Human schemes for social and political improvement have their value; but they deal with things to be done *for* us, rather than with things to be done *in* us, with what we are to *get* rather than with what we are to *be*. They change the circumstances, but they leave the man untouched; they alter the surroundings, but they have no power to transform the character. Hence their failure to uplift

humanity. The roots of the evils which curse men are found in the human heart estranged from God and deceived by evil. Any reform, therefore, which does not reach the heart is of necessity superficial and transitory. In Horace Bushnell's pregnant words, 'The soul of all improvement is the improvement of the soul.' Hence the Lord of Life, leaving the surface of things, sinks His shaft deep down into the moral and spiritual nature of man. Repentance, regeneration, holiness—these are the watchwords of His kingdom, and His power to confer them on all the souls which sigh for forgiveness and moral perfection is the guarantee of His ultimate triumph over the alien forces which have drawn men aside from God and virtue, and which lie at the root of the degradation and misery of men.

Christ the Life of Men

In the Founder of the kingdom of which we write we behold a Teacher who gives not only precepts, but life. We behold in Him not only the Light, but also the Life of men. He is that 'Promethean Conqueror' who, in the might of a divine omnipotence, says to the moral leper, 'I will; be thou clean'; and to the soul dead in trespasses and sins, 'I say unto thee, arise.' And lo! at His word, pollution gives place to purity, and life throbs

where death had reigned. He imparts to the enfeebled souls of men, if utterly surrendered to Him, the energy for which they sigh. 'To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God,' and that ancient miracle is continually repeated in the Christian experience of to-day. 'The spirit of life in Christ Jesus' frees men from 'the law of sin and death.' A vital inspiration of goodness, of faith, of purity, of love, and of self-sacrifice streams into the soul united by faith to the living Christ, imparting to it a true salvation by delivering it from the sin which is its great curse and its real damnation. Jesus Christ does that which no other being who ever trod the earth has been able to do. He raises men from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; He wakes the dormant eternity in their hearts; He nerves them for battle with evil angels and with evil men; He strangles the serpents of vile habits, which, as in Dante's awful vision, had become incorporate with their blood and life, and flings them to the dust; He kindles within them love, and pity, and joyous self-sacrifice; He gives them new hopes, new aims, new enthusiasms; He regenerates their affections and desires; He energizes their will with the inbreathed power of God. 'The lapse of time,' says Fichte, 'serves only to confirm the everlasting miracle, that, in all who

come unto God through Christ Jesus, a new heart is created.'

Thus was the persecuting Saul transformed into Paul, the apostle, the hero, and the martyr; thus was the vision of the titanic Luther unsealed when he descended the staircase of Pilate with the great Reformation surging in his heart; thus was Bunyan redeemed from the utterance of awful blasphemies to become the pioneer of the King's highway—the writer of *The Pilgrim's Progress*; thus was William Wilberforce drawn from the racecourse and the ballroom into the orbit of piety, to live a life so fragrant that its perfume lingers with us still.

And, in many instances, the impartation of this life is so vivid and so instantaneous, that no one can escape from the conviction that it is nothing less than miraculous. After a long and hopeless wrestling with evil in its own strength, only to be again and again defeated in the conflict, the soul unites itself with Christ, and is immediately healed. At a leap, at a bound, it passes from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The weeds and poisonous growths of the soul's neglected garden are not cleared away by the patient hand of tillage, but consumed at a single breath. The fetters of evil habit are not slowly filed away, but fused as by a lightning flash from heaven.

The slow process of evolution, on which some depend for the renovation of the soul, is crushed into the one resolve, thus expressed: 'I accept Christ as my Saviour and Lord.' We do not mean to imply that a perfect character is thus imparted, but the whole trend and current of the soul is changed, and the germ is implanted which fitly nurtured, may flower into a perfect manhood. Thus, through the might of the Son of God,

Lives celestial from terrestrial rise,
And teach us, not jejune, what we are,
But what we may be, when the Parian block
Yields to the hand of Phidias.

The annals of the Early Church attested the power of Christianity to uplift and transform the most ignorant and degraded. 'Poor unlettered men,' says a Christian apologist, 'were seen to reach a height of moral dignity and beauty which the most cultured philosophers had failed to win. A glow of conscious divine life inspired all their thoughts and actions. This the pagans around them could not fail to notice; and to this the Christian apologists loved to appeal as the surest proof of the divine origin of their religion.' The same spectacle confronts us in the history of the Methodist Church. It is a record of the life of God in the souls of humble and uncultured men—a record 'sealed by the tears of penitents, by the ecstasy of believing

multitudes, and by the sanctity of reformed lives.' The same evidence of the power of the gospel of Christ to transform character, and thus effect a moral revolution from within, is found in the rank and file of the Salvation Army. It is this which has made the social work of the Army the wonder and the envy of secular philanthropists. They have got, through the gospel of the Cross, at the hearts of men. Deliverance from the thralldom of vice, and the power to maintain virtue, have come in the train of the spiritual regeneration of the soul.

The healing of the world
Is in its nameless saints.

The kingdom of Christ proceeds from the simple to the complex, from the individual to the mass; and this is the only method for social uplifting. All hope of the salvation of society lies in the divine forces entrusted by God to the souls of great and good men and women. Consecrated personality is the great elemental force. To quote from Thomas Carlyle: 'Neither is there, was there, nor will there be, any other Golden Age possible, save only in this; in new increase of worth and wisdom—that is to say, therefore, in the new arrival among us of wise and worthy men.' Give us these men, and, we will add, women also, among rich and poor—among the leaders of labour and

the wielders of capital, in the mean street and the palatial square; men and women unselfish, devoted, earnest—and they will lead the nation up to higher and better things. Can Christianity create such men and women? Can it transform and ennoble individual souls? Then, without question, the gladder future is in its hands. If it converts the soul it will stand, and it will prevail and triumph.

The Assured Triumph

We must not lose the inspiration of hope. We must believe in God and in that gospel which is 'the power of God unto salvation.' We must go forth to our duty with a foregone faith that all poverty, disease, crime, sorrow, meanness, and all strife are destined to pass away for ever from the fair face of our redeemed world, and that we ourselves are meant to help these things to pass. Upon the ruins of all other kingdoms there is rising in majestic silence the kingdom of Christ. Its progress is slow, because the heart of man cannot be moulded as clay; because liberty in man implies the possibility on his part of refusing allegiance to virtue and to God; and because divine ideas and purposes when committed to men must suffer from human infirmity and sin. But its progress is sure, because it embodies a divine purpose, and because it meets

the deepest needs, and is in harmony with the noblest aspirations of humanity.

The purpose of this divine kingdom is to make men like Christ and earth like heaven. It is intended to renew the human race and restore it to God in the unity of a spiritual empire. It contemplates nothing less than the subjugation of the will of man to the holy will of God, and the gathering in, at last, of all peoples and kindreds of the earth into a vast universal brotherhood of peace, and truth, and love, under Christ the anointed King. It is He who has said, 'Behold, I make all things new,' and His word will be fulfilled because He is the divine head of the human race, sent for its redemption and final restoration.

He has left behind
Powers that will work for Him—air, earth, and skies;
There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget Him; He has great allies—
His friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

XV. THE INSANITY OF WAR

Vain is man's passion and desire
To harness steam and conquer fire,
To bind the torrents' overflow,
And bid the lightnings come and go,
While war still stalks in red array,
To smite and desolate and slay.
Here, with a calm, deliberate will,
Let him exert his boasted skill;
And hurl its thunder, woe, and flame,
Back to the hell from whence they came.

R. P. D.

I abominate war as unchristian; I hold it the greatest of human crimes; I deem it to involve all others—violence, blood, rapine, fraud; everything that can deform the character, alter the nature, and debase the name of man.—LORD BROUGHAM.

FIFTY years ago an earnest liberationist wrote on the then debated subject of slavery: 'At a future day it will probably become a subject of wonder how it could have happened that upon such a subject as Slavery men should have inquired and examined and debated year after year; and that many years actually passed before the minds of a nation were so fully convinced of its enormity, and of their consequent duty to abolish it, as to suppress it to the utmost of their power.'

We have faith to believe that fifty years hence a like wonder will be expressed on the subject of War.

It is indeed nothing less than astounding that in civilized and enlightened Europe, in this age of broadening humanity, of the growth of the social conscience, and of widespread gospel teaching, it should be needful for any writer to attack this dreadful plague of human slaughter on the battlefield. The evolution of the human race has, indeed, been painfully slow, seeing that this tiger, with its lust of blood and carnage, has not already been slain and buried. The outrage of its continued existence favours the idea of a daring thinker, that the spirits of a number of insane angels have been permitted to possess the souls of men and govern them at will.

It is only the fact that we have been familiar with war for ages, and have thus been cozened by custom into the toleration of its enormities, that it is not held up to universal execration. If we could only forget that war had ever been adopted as the means of settling the disputes of nations; if the scenes of a battlefield, with its ghastly riot of rage and blood, were displayed before us for the first time, we should be thrilled with astonishment and horror.

An Amazing Spectacle

How appalling is the outlook in the present day! Every State in Christendom is armed against every

other. No faith can be placed in plighted promise or in solemn treaty. Every pretension of friendship is at the mercy of the caprice of a moment. They are deemed the wisest monarchs and the shrewdest statesmen who can form the most powerful alliances for successful conflict. There is a profession of arms—a profession of men trained to kill each other, as fully recognized as the profession of medicine or of law ; a profession in whose view peace is regarded as a calamity, because it blocks the way to promotion and to higher emoluments. Millions of men stand armed and ready at the decree of a council, or the bidding of a despot, to mangle and destroy each other. The flash of a telegram may at any hour set them in motion, and, with them, a thousand engines of destruction. These millions are drawn from the ranks of industry, and fed and equipped at an enormous cost for the express purpose of what is nothing less than wholesale murder. The genius and labour of countless thousands of human workers is expended in the invention and manufacture of the deadliest possible appliances for human slaughter. It is no freak of imagination, but a statement of fact, that the present huge accumulation of armaments is crushing the life and soul out of modern Europe and threatening the nations with bankruptcy.

In the March of 1909 Sir Edward Grey, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said, in

the British House of Commons: 'I would ask people to consider to what consequences the growth of armaments has led. The great countries of Europe are raising enormous revenues, and something like half of that is being spent in preparations to kill each other. A great deal of the responsibility of this expenditure has really become a satire and reflection on civilization. If this goes on—not in our generation, perhaps, but if it goes on at the rate at which it has recently increased—sooner or later it will submerge civilization. . . . Sooner or later, if it goes on at this rate, it must lead to national bankruptcy.'

It is calculated that the present armed peace of Europe, through its armies and navies, is answerable for an annual expenditure of from four hundred to five hundred millions sterling. Now, if the genius, the wealth, and the labour thus insanely wasted were devoted to peaceful industries, vast areas of land now lying waste would be redeemed for pasture or for forestry, every toiling man would have a home where his children might be brought up in decency and in comfort, no man would need to labour above six hours a day, the foetid slums and fevered alleys which are the scandal of our great cities would be swept away, the stunted and useless lives which are spawned in them would cease to fill us with despair, no girl would be compelled to follow any arduous or degrading occupation, and every infirm and aged worker

would spend the evening of life in a peaceful twilight which death would linger to disturb.

As a matter of statistics, the armies and navies of Europe on a peace footing number six millions of men, and on a war footing, at the very lowest estimate, ten millions. Think of all this splendid human energy—energy which, if wisely directed, might transform the earth into a garden—being devoted to the shameful task of human slaughter. Even allowing for the circumstance that a large proportion of these men are young, they should represent as bread-winners at least four times their number, with regard to the whole population. Yet they are withdrawn from the struggle by which Nature is subdued and made to minister to the general comfort and happiness, and offered up to the demon of war.

It is sheer folly to affirm, in defence of this insane procedure, that to be thus prepared for war is the best way to secure peace. The very existence of these colossal appliances for war is a continual menace. To use the words of William Ewart Gladstone: ‘We have no adequate idea of the predisposing powers which an immense series of measures of preparation for war on our own part have in actually begetting war. They familiarize the ideas which, when familiar, lose their terror, and they light a new flame of excitement, of which, when it is habitually fed, we lose the consciousness.’

In most cases, instead of settling differences, war perpetuates them. It multiplies the evils it attempts to cure. The successful nation, flushed with victory, pants for new laurels, and frequently becomes insolent in its pride ; while the beaten nation, humbled by defeat, thirsts for revenge and for reprisals. A proud people cannot forget or forgive. They are impatient to redeem their honour and repair their losses. The Place de Concorde in Paris mocks the idea of any concord with Germany in the mourning wreaths continually renewed at the foot of the statue representing Alsace and Lorraine.

If it is urged that the vast armaments of modern Europe are maintained not for slaughter, but only for self-defence, we reply that no such measures of self-defence could be necessary if men were only humane and reasonable. It is unreasoning passion which is the bane of nations as it is of individual men. We need to confront with solid reason the delusions which lead captive the unthinking world ; to dethrone in the cause of right and justice that intrusive and misleading tyrant

Opinion, an Omnipotence,—whose veil
Mantles the earth with darkness.

What is War ?

Many grave abuses are perpetrated simply from the want of inquiry into their character and their

issues. They have not been abolished because they have not been understood. Some glamour or fascination has hung over them which has veiled their real nature. The touch of some Ithuriel spear is needed to unmask the demon and arouse the hate his presence should inspire. It is thus with the demon of war. Strip it of the pomp and circumstance with which it has been invested, and it is nothing less than wholesale murder. A million men meet an opposing million on the battlefield, utterly unconscious of any personal animosity, and set about to destroy each other as ruthlessly and speedily as is possible through the character of the engines of destruction which they command. They left their homes as kindly human creatures—fathers, brothers, sons; but, once in the field, they discard their manhood, and become destroyers of their kind.

War is Murder

War is murder, and murder on a gigantic scale. Neither, with regard to the combatants, can it plead the justification of that personal wrong which sometimes constitutes vengeance a kind of wild justice.

We read of a single murder and are shocked; but what of the fact, established by carefully considered statistics, that in a single quarter of a century—namely, from 1855 to 1880—over two millions of men were cut off by the sword? Thus—

The foulest stain and scandal of our nature
Becomes its boast. One murder makes a villain ;
Millions a hero.

We deal expeditiously and fatally with the slayer of one man ; but France erects in purest marble the loveliest tomb in Europe over the dust of a military tyrant who was responsible in all for the slaughter in offensive, and not defensive, war, of four millions of men.

And what horrible conditions does this slaughter assume ! Skulls are shattered, limbs are mangled and torn, the precious gifts of hearing or of eyesight are destroyed, carcasses are disembowelled, and souls charged with frenzied hate are swept out of life in a moment to front the solemn issues of eternity.

How awful is the human holocaust offered to the demon of slaughter ! The ground shakes and trembles. The shells go shrieking through the serried ranks, wounding and shattering as they fly. The Gatling guns pile up the wounded and the dead in swathes like wheat beneath the mower's scythe. Screams, and shouts, and curses blend with the roar of the artillery, which hurls to the ground valorous men in the spring and prime of life a blackened, bloody mass of writhing flesh.

Before the conflict ends, the earth is strewn with human beings tortured and dying. The plunging horses of the retreating cavalry trample them. The

blood-stained wheels of the gun-carriages roll over them. Some cry, 'Water! water! for God's sake, give us water!' Others implore the mercy of instant death. Then, when night falls, and the horrid carnage ceases, how pitiful the low, heart-piercing wail which rises from the stricken field!

It was sights and sounds such as these which forced from the lips of General Skobeleff the confession: 'I hate war! On my honour and conscience, I detest it! Before God I tell you that I do. I have had twenty-one thousand men killed under me in one campaign, and have realized all that is sickening, cruel, odious, atrocious in the military profession.'

And all this to settle some dispute, or fix some boundary, or avenge some fancied slight, or correct some diplomatic blunder, or annex some roods or miles of extra territory, or gratify some wild ambition of king or kaiser! Truly, it is high time our bayonets began to think! The horror of the thing is not more monstrous than its absurdity.

War is a game that, were their subjects wise,
Kings would not play at.

Nor do the miseries of war end on the field of battle. What of the sufferings in the hospital, where, with amazing inconsistency, we strive to mend that which we have previously so pitilessly

maimed? What of the numberless families plunged into a sorrow which in this world can never be healed? What of the mothers and children crushed under the wheels of this hideous Juggernaut?

The special correspondent of a London daily related a thrilling incident of the Russo-Japanese war. A few hours before the Japanese shelled Port Arthur and Dalny, Admiral Alexeieff issued orders that all the women and children in both places should be dispatched without delay to European Russia. Over two thousand of these unhappy fugitives, six hundred of whom were children, were packed into two trains and sent off, in the frost and snow, to Lake Baikal. This journey, because of the crowded state of the line, took five days, with the children huddling together for warmth, and crying with misery and hunger.

At Baikal this pitiful freight were turned out of the railway trucks to face the crossing of the frozen lake. This was done in open sledges in the face of withering winds and arrows of icy sleet. Several children were found dead by the time the lake was crossed, some clasped in the stiffened arms of their dead mothers, while the miserable remnant were more than decimated with cold and hunger before the subsequent railway journey came to an end.

Such things follow in the train of war; and yet.

blinded by its pomp and circumstance, we hear of them—

As Dutchmen hear of earthquakes in Calabria,
And never stop to cry, 'Alack-a-day!'

No power that was ever let loose upon the world has operated with such tremendous force against human happiness as war. No tyrant has ever been guilty of such atrocities; and yet, with all its nameless horrors, it is often the result only of some stupid blunder on the part of nations or their representatives.

The Crimean war was a blunder, with results utterly absurd, when we consider that in less than six months it led to the sacrifice of five hundred thousand men, many of whom expired in circumstances of intense suffering. The Franco-German war was equally stupid and shameful, springing, with all its appalling slaughter, from an incident so trivial that it offers an insult to human intelligence. The conflict of America in the Philippines has proved to be, in the light of subsequent events, equally indefensible. A testy, impatient statesman on the one side, and a stupid, fanatical Boer ruler on the other, plunged us into the South African war; and where are the results which justify its tears, and blood, and reckless expenditure? The action of Russia when, in the invasion of Korea, she threatened the very existence of Japan, was a

deed of insane folly. And how unspeakably terrible were the consequences !

We are reminded of Southey's lines in his ballad on the ' Battle of Blenheim ' :

' But what good came of it at last ? '

Quoth little Peterkin.

' Why, that I cannot tell,' said he,

' But 'twas a famous victory.'

That our protest may not suffer because convicted of extravagance, we will here express our conviction that there are great and noble causes in which the resort to arms may be justified, as, for example, when Britain in the Peninsular campaign put forth her strength to check the devastating progress of Napoleon ; or as she might, in righteous anger, have drawn the sword to end, in the interests of humanity, the Congo horrors, or the ruthless Bulgarian and Armenian massacres. But such action would have meant a deserved penalty on dastardly iniquity, and not the species of war against which we are protesting.

War is a Foe to Morals

When reason and conscience are flung overboard into the gulf of passion, as is too frequently the case with nations engaged in war, great injury is inflicted on that moral sense which is the glory and the strength of men and nations. Selfishness and lust of slaughter are the predominant sentiments created by war.

While it is being waged, excesses are applauded and deeds condoned which in cool blood would be branded as devilish. The slaughter of thousands is hailed with delirious joy, cities are illuminated to celebrate the triumph, and a whole country is given up to revelry and riot. Thus the loftiest attributes of our nature—those attributes in which we most resemble God—sympathy, pity, affection, and the love which leads to helpfulness and service, are trampled, insulted, and profaned. Robert Hall has truly said, ‘War reverses, with respect to its objects, all the rules of morality. It is nothing less than a temporary repeal of all the principles of virtue. It is a system out of which almost all the virtues are excluded, and in which nearly all the vices are incorporated.’

No man can be familiar with human slaughter without having his moral feelings injured and blunted, and his moral vision obscured. He who plunders the citizen of another nation without remorse or regret must have his conceptions of honesty as between man and man rudely shaken. He who shoots a creature made in his own likeness on the field of battle without a tremor must suffer in his ideas concerning the sanctity of human life. Yet further, the rules of war demand an unconditional obedience, which more or less strips a man of his manhood. He may regard the war in which he is

engaged as unjust, but he must join in it whatever his convictions. He may pity the poorly equipped savages or fanatics who face the hail of death-dealing bullets provided by a superior cunning, but he must fire and mow them down. Such a surrender of moral agency as that, in which a man violates his own sense of rectitude, is in itself debasing, apart altogether from the suffering it inflicts.

Lecky, the historian, dealing with this subject, says : ' War is not, and never can be, a mere passionless discharge of a painful duty. It is, in its essence, and it is a main condition of its success, to kindle into fierce exercise among great masses of men the destructive and combative passions—passions as fierce and as malevolent as that with which the hound hunts the fox to its death, or the tiger springs upon its prey. Destruction is one of its chief ends ; deception is one of its chief means ; and one of the great arts of skilful generalship is to deceive in order to destroy. . . . When the scene of carnage is once opened, these things must not only be accepted and condoned, but stimulated, encouraged, and applauded. It would be difficult to conceive a disposition more remote from the morals of ordinary life, not to speak of Christian ideals, than that with which the soldiers, most animated with the fire and passion that lead to victory, rush forward to bayonet the foe.'

'Live and let live,' writes an Austrian officer of

rank, 'is no device for an army. Contempt for one's own comrades, for the troops of the enemy, and, above all, fierce contempt for one's own person, are what war demands of every one. Far better is it for an army to be too savage, too cruel, too barbarous, than to possess too much sentimentality and human reasonableness. If the soldier is to be good for anything as a soldier, he must be exactly the opposite of a reasoning and thinking man. The measure of goodness in him is his possible use in war. War, and even peace, require of the soldier absolutely peculiar standards of morality. The recruit brings with him common moral notions, of which he must seek immediately to get rid. For him, victory, success, must be everything. The most barbaric tendencies in men come to life again in war, and for war's uses they are incommensurably good.'

How callous and terrible is all this! What a reversal of manhood is that by which we are thus called to revert to the beast and the barbarian! On what principle of humanity or morals can such pleading as this be justified? Yet these are the doctrines of war.

The effect of a military campaign on the fighting man attests the brutality which the hellish work of slaughter evokes.

Dr. Conan Doyle sent a graphic picture of a

company of our war-wolves to a London journal during the progress of the Boer war. It is couched in terms of admiration, but its lesson lies too deep for tears. 'It was only General Smith-Dorrien's Brigade,' writes Dr. Doyle; 'but if it could have passed, just as it was, down Piccadilly, it would have driven London crazy. I watched them—ragged, bearded, fierce-eyed infantry—struggling along amid a cloud of dust. Who could have conceived, who had seen the trim soldier in time of peace, that he could so quickly transform himself into this grim, virile barbarian? Bull-dog faces, hawk faces, hungry wolf faces—every sort of face except a weak one.' The heart may leap as we read the description; but it must be an evil thing which thus sends back the civilized man to the 'grim barbarian.'

War is an Outrage on Humanity.

Charles Fox said, 'One of the most evil consequences of war is, that it tends to render the hearts of mankind callous to the feelings and sentiments of humanity.' No darker impeachment than this could be pronounced on any system. Glory, and patriotism, and valour, and conquest, may be tempting things, but if they trample humanity into the dust, they are bought at too high a price. Insomuch as beneath all varieties of race, and diversities of culture, and hostility of interests, there runs, deep

down, that bond of oneness, expressed by the simple word *human*, making each man, despite every difference, brother to every other man, we are compelled to regard war as cruel, inhuman, and a thing to be abhorred. We do not undervalue the sentiment of patriotism, or deny that it is a noble thing for men to die for their country, but the higher moral consciousness now being evolved will ere long emphatically declare that the race comes before the nation. The sense of the brotherhood of the race has already made slavery a thing abhorred by all civilized communities, and by the same eternal bond war should be execrated and abolished. The great conception of the universal Fatherhood of God, which is slowly but surely humanizing all our theologies, finds its inevitable complement in the universal brotherhood of man. 'God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth,' said the greatest of all the Apostles ; and, when we shed the blood of our brother man, we wound the Great Central Heart which feeds the pulses of the human world. Lord Bacon declared that there is in man's nature 'a secret love of others, which, if not contracted, would expand and embrace all men.' This sentiment is deepened in the present day by the greater facilities of intercourse with other peoples and nations, brought about by steam, electricity, and widening commerce. There is a

growing sense of the solidarity of the race. It is discovered that no human creature, whatever his disadvantages of birth and environment, can be an object of hate, but that all men are children of one family, members of one body, members one of another. This discovery in itself should lead to the abolition of war.

War is a Mockery of Christianity

The seeming blindness of the Christian Church to this fact is one of the saddest proofs existing of the slowness with which divine counsels are assimilated by the children of men. If civilized nations really believed and practised the religion they profess, war would stand side by side with murder and sacrilege in human judgement. Is it possible for men, whether they be plain men or bishops of the Church, to study the New Testament without becoming convinced that war is opposed to the whole spirit and genius of the Christian faith? The teaching of Christ—the Incarnate Son of God, who is ‘the Way, the Truth, and the Life’ for men—is one impassioned protest against wrath, revenge, violence, and fighting. If the voice which Christians regard as that of the Eternal Wisdom is of any moment as a guide to human thought and conduct, then war is branded by the oracle of heaven as a thing accursed. It is admitted by all students of the New Testament that, however far they may be in front of our present

attainment, the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount state the laws of the kingdom which Christ came to establish in the world of men. How, then, can we study these laws and yet tolerate the horrors of war?

We are not surprised that Herbert Spencer should have affirmed with pungent satire that we have two religions—one that we actually believe, and another that we believe that we believe; one derived from Paganism, and the other taken from the New Testament. The first is the religion of enmity, and the basis and spring of the doctrine of blood-revenge; the second is the religion of amity, and the basis and spring of the doctrine of self-sacrifice and human service. The peculiar note of the gospel is: Blessed are the meek; Blessed are the merciful; Blessed are the peace-makers. Jesus said, 'Put up thy sword; all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword.'

x Professed followers of the Prince of Peace, amenable to the inexorable law, 'Thou shalt not kill!' we mock our Master, and profane the counsel of the Most High, when we stoop to the fiendish work of war. The lines of Longfellow are appropriate here:

Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
 Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
 Given to redeem the human mind from error,
 There were no need of arsenals nor forts.

The warrior's name would be a name abhorred,
And every nation that should lift again
Its hand against a brother, on its forehead
Should wear for evermore the curse of Cain.

The Responsibility of the Press

The responsibility of the Press is also very great on this vital issue. Writers who appeal to a large public through the medium of the newspapers may fitly pause when tempted by considerations of profit, through a larger circulation, to excite the passions of the people and inflame the nations of the world in this direction. In a speech of solemn import on the question of the Press and the Empire, delivered in the June of 1909, the Hon. Winston Churchill urged the following considerations on the journalists assembled in a conference of their order:—

‘It had been said words were the only things which lasted for ever. Utterances which had passed from human lips, and which appeared to have been stilled almost at the moment they had been spoken, had endured, and were enduring, while the most enduring and tremendous monuments which had been erected had crumbled and passed away altogether.

‘The way in which the British Press and British writers could best serve the large and general interests of the British Empire was to write wise, good, and true words—words proclaiming the solidarity of Christendom, and the interdependence of nations

and refrain from words which would cause friction and mischief-making among nations. Let them be words which asserted that confidence produced confidence between the nations, just in the same way as hatred and suspicion produced the very dangers which gave them birth. The Great Powers of the world were not great cut-throats and assassins, striking for sinister and infernal ends; but, on the other hand, should rather be considered as brothers, pursuing the same high ideals as ourselves, and treading the same road, continually upwards, and ever approaching a brighter and more glorious end.'

It is urged by apologists for war that it is a school of heroism and strenuous life—that while it is being waged, splendid energies are set free and life is set on a higher plane of power. Surely, however, it is easy to discover in social service some equivalent for war, something heroic which will appeal to nobler qualities in the soul, and whose end shall be to *save* and not to *slay*! Might not help for the wretched and the unfortunate, and light and guidance for backward races steeped in dark idolatries, supply the fitting 'transformation of military courage'? Is there nothing which needs to be done for the weary, hopeless, degraded masses who are the mockery of our boasted civilization? Must the only fire we kindle be hell-fire? Surely it needs but a little serious thought burnt in by

the vision of the Christ of Calvary to suppress this devilry! If the question be forced upon us, 'Do you go so far as to advocate the absolute doctrine of non-resistance in the case of invasion by a determined enemy?' we answer emphatically 'No!' We must admit the duty of every man to defend his hearth and home, apart altogether from the unspeakable calamity to the whole human race which would be involved in the extinction of the British nation. If, therefore, on some blind and unrighteous issue war should be forced upon us, with its array of fierce, impassioned men, hungry for slaughter, we should be compelled to meet it as we should meet an attack on the part of wolves or tigers. Until the nations are of one accord on this great question we shall be forced to maintain such armaments as may preserve us from defeat and extinction. But why should not universal humanity in this twentieth century of the Christian era combine for the annihilation of this crying evil?

The Abolition of War

He was a wise man who attached to his book entitled *Darkest England*, the hopeful words 'and the way out.' It may be taken for granted that all humane and intelligent men are convinced that war is a great evil, stimulating the darkest passions of our nature, and inflicting untold misery on the com-

batants. What we all desire is to find 'the way out.' We are fools and not wise if we tolerate and perpetuate any great evil which we have the power to abolish. And, with regard to the remedy, it is worthy of remark that the matter does not rest with the unthinking crowd, but with the cultured intelligence of mankind. It is to this that we make our appeal on a question so vital and so momentous.

To affirm that war is necessary and inevitable is to affirm that man is powerless to cure an evil which is his own creation. What man can create he can certainly destroy. He possesses the power. All that he needs is the resolute will. The calamities which are of human origin are capable of a human remedy. The sentiment of humanity which has abolished slavery can also abolish war. (The difficulties to be encountered are great, and it must be a work of time ; but the difficulties are by no means insurmountable. The work at first will be the work of idealists, but it is the idealists who have changed the face of the world. They have led what at first appeared to be a forlorn hope, but they have moved on a line with the divine purpose and have eventually triumphed.)

Hopes of good men are heavenly prophecies ;
 They stand above the sentried heights of time,
 With faces filled with dawn-light and with forms
 Invincible, and there above all storms
 They chant their revelation, leading on
 The shadowed world to finer destinies.

As a stimulus to action, four things need to be remembered. First, that war is a great and crying evil. Second, that war is not the best way of settling the difficulties with which it proposes to deal. Third, that international arbitration would be a better method of settlement than war could possibly be. Fourth, that reason, justice, and humanity demand such a mode of settlement as opposed to the hideous and inhuman slaughter involved in war.

International Arbitration

Surely the time is ripe for international arbitration on the lines suggested by the Hague Conference. All that is needed is a resort to reason, justice, and humanity, sustained and enforced by an international judicature and an international executive. Through these, the enlightened Christian nations should intervene to crush the war spirit, and render its widespread ravages impossible, until the universal conscience had so far developed as to approve their action and with consentaneous voice to pronounce war a thing inhuman and accursed. 'Peace hath her victories not less than war,' and we have welcomed them with delight when sanity has prevailed over folly, pride, and passion. When Great Britain submitted to the Alabama arbitration and accepted the judgement of the court of inquiry, she won a glorious victory—the victory of justice over

national pride. Nor does this victory stand alone in the community of nations. It was repeated in the acquiescence given by Russia after 1878, when her treaty of San Stefano was annulled ; by Japan in 1896, when she submitted to the verdict which wrested from her the fruits of her victory over China ; by France on the eve of the conference at Algeciras ; and by Germany after Casa Blanca, when she yielded to France over the deserters' dispute. The Chancelleries of Europe are adequate for the settlement of a national controversy if it is only fairly set before them. The machinery of peace could be made mightier than the machinery of war if the nations so willed it. A Parliament of Humanity would make blood-shedding impossible. Get rid of the base selfishness which has been the principle on which the affairs of nations have for the most part been conducted. Get rid of the falsehoods and intrigues licensed by diplomacy. Curb the power of the autocrats at whose insane and cruel bidding the nations rush upon each other. Instruct the men who bear the sword concerning the misery which war inflicts. Bid them listen to the wail of the widow, the cry of the orphan, and mark the tears of the bereaved mother shed for the son mangled and murdered on the stricken field, and war will perish. ' For,' to adapt to our purpose the lines of William Blake—

For vain the sword, and vain the bow—
They never can work war's overthrow ;
The good man's prayer and the widow's tear
Alone can free the world from fear.

For a tear is an intellectual thing,
And a sigh is the sword of an angel king ;
And the bitter groan of a warrior's woe
Is an arrow from the Almighty's bow.

How reasonable the suggestion that the civilized nations of the world should in time of peace establish a recognized international tribunal, before which the quarrels of States should be tried ; a tribunal so intelligent, so impartial, and so just, that if a nation refused to abide by its decisions it should be branded with dishonour in the face of all the world. The time is ripe. The need is great. The duty admits of no delay. It is a call of God which it is infamy to disregard. The Peace Propaganda is in the air. The peoples are weary of the blood-stained past. A new standard of international morality has been created. War must die !

The New Spirit

A new spirit is abroad among the nations. It is becoming as clear as daylight that men are bound by the most solemn obligations to enrich the life of the world, and not to destroy it. The consensual voice of humanity will ere long disallow the criminal folly of war.

We believe in the sufficiency of the moral sentiment. We believe in the divinity of the common conscience of mankind. It is in this sense that the *vox populi* is the *vox Dei*—the voice of the people, the voice of God. In a universe so dominated by wisdom and intelligence that every atom has its law and every star its orbit, it is folly to suppose that the human soul is alone derelict, utterly abandoned to chance and accident. No! there are laws of mind, laws of wisdom and folly, of right and wrong, clear to the common intelligence of the race, and as absolute and universal as those which control the snowflake or the planet. Let these laws have full play. Let the consensus of human opinion be brought to bear on the subject, apart from the selfishness and pride and passion of rulers and diplomatists, and war will be hissed from the stage of the world as an insult to reason and intelligence.

On all great moral issues the appeal to the people meets with a ready response. The law of righteousness is written, not merely in a sacred book, but on the tablets of the human soul.

There is a splendid hope in behalf of the cause of peace in the revolt of the war-taxed, heavily burdened industrial peoples of the world, against the extravagant waste of money, men, and material resources involved in the insane work of war.

We are apt to speak with contempt of the yellow

racess of the world, and especially of the 'Heathen Chinees.' In the November of 1908, however, under the title 'No More War,' we find reported by the London Press the following :

'Sir Robert Hart, speaking at Lisburn, said that in one hundred or two hundred years the four hundred million people of China would be as strong in arms, individually and nationally, as the great Power of Germany was at the present moment. Then they would turn to the rest of the world and say there must be no more war. China would throw in the force of her arms with the country that was attacked, and against the country that made war, and in that way would the millennium come.'

Thus are our philosophers, and moralists, and war-applauding followers of the Prince of Peace put to the blush by the 'Heathen Chinees.'

Knowing the right, if aught is wrong below,
Then wrong it is that we should leave it so.

A Harmony of Nations

The wars which have desolated the world have resulted from a misconception of the divine purpose in the destiny of nations. The families of the earth have been separated from each other by mountains and oceans, and still more by diversity of language for a divine end, which has been perverted by human selfishness and human passion. The end contem-

plated was that each nation, by the free development of its own peculiar genius, should contribute something to humanity as a whole—that they should stand in relation to each other, not as jarring discords, but as varied notes in a divine music.

Ill feeling between nations arises from their ignorance of one another and of the divine purpose with regard to them. When mankind truly understand one another they will be at peace. By bringing men together you reconcile them. Their suspicions and enmities are put to flight. The 'White City' of 1908 will live in history, because it has taught the men of England and France that they should not be enemies, but brothers. The linking together of the continents by modern facilities for travel is producing the same result all the world over. The human race, as a whole, is growing into the consciousness of its unity. The sense of brotherhood is dawning on the minds of men, and it will slay the demons of hate and war. As Shelley sings:

A brighter morn awaits the human day,
When every transfer of earth's natural gifts
Shall be a commerce of good words and works;
When poverty and wealth, the thirst for fame,
The fear of infamy, disease, and woe,
War with its million horrors, and fierce hell,
Shall live but in the memory of Time,
Who, like a penitent libertine, shall start,
Look back and shudder at his younger years.

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